

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

Kitchen Witch

One who practices by hearth and home!



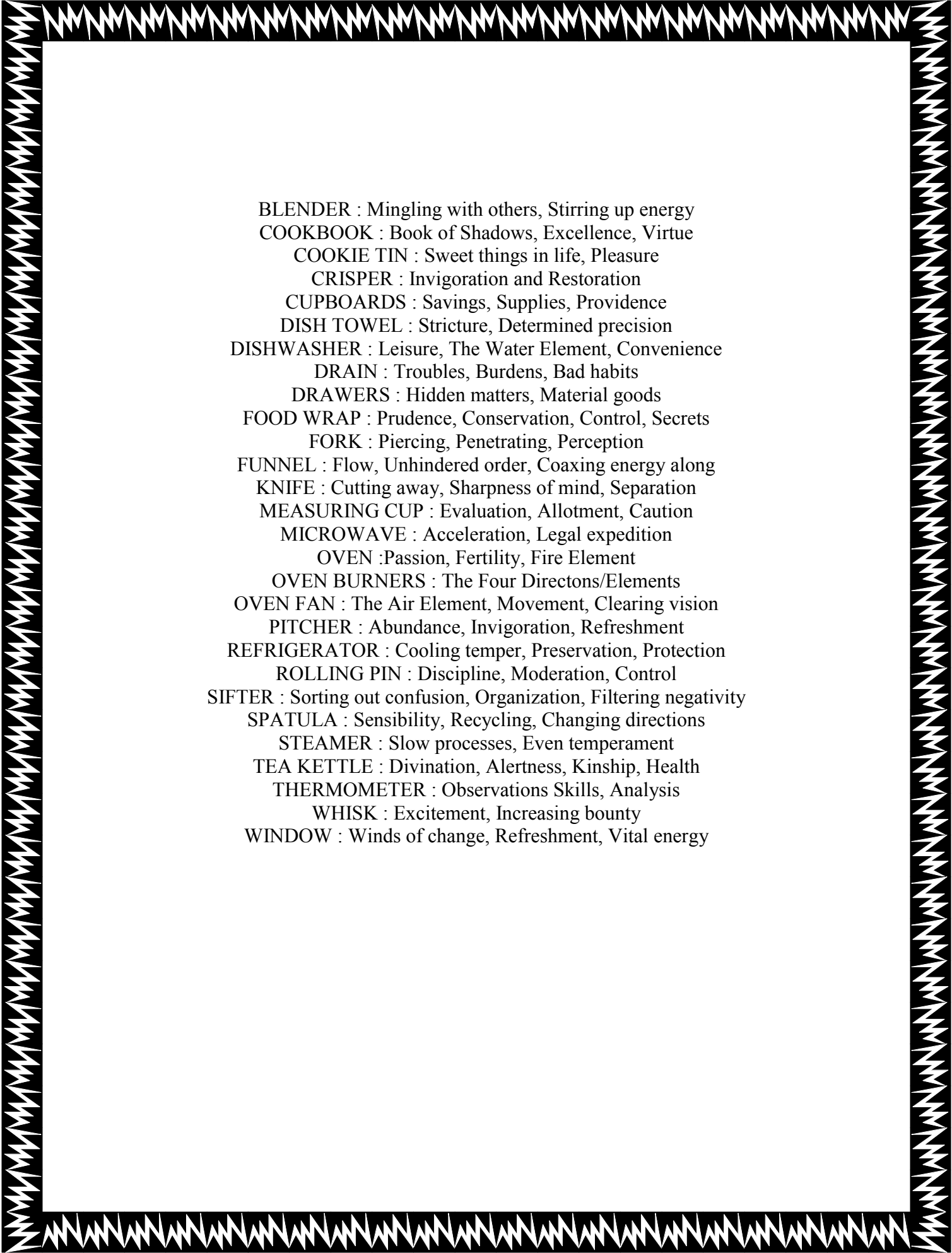
The Kitchen Witch's Creed

**In this pot, I stir to the sun
an' follow the rule of harming none.
Banishment of bane when goin' widdershins;
an' with water and salt negativity is cleansed.
Household duties are more than chores.
Magick abounds when mopping floors.
With this broom, I do sweep
to clean my house and safely keep.
Marigold, Basil, Thyme, and Yarrow
my spell is cast for a better tomorrow.
Lemons for joy and apples for health
the pow'r within brings great wealth.
And, in this kitchen I do pray
To truly walk the Witches' Way**

KITCHEN WITCH ABC's

*Always stir in a clockwise motion
Before you chop veggies, offer thanks
Cut mindfully, gratefully
Do all preparations in a loving spirit
Energize food with good thoughts
Feast gratefully
Give & share what you can spare
Home & hearth are sacred
Invoke blessings of Goddess on all food
Join hands with friends often
Kindness shows in serving food
Love goes into every dish
Mindfully gather ingredients
No wasting - recycle, compost, feed animals
Open your senses, enjoy your surroundings
Play as well as work
Quench thirst, thinking of clear clean rivers
Resolve to be grateful & waste not
Salivate as you smell fragrance & anticipate flavors
Thank the Universe & Goddess for health
Use utensils carefully, then clean up
Value time spent with loved ones
When possible grow & harvest your food
Xtra food is for creative recombining
Yearly rituals & feasts build traditions
Zestful living in every area is our goal.*

Tools of A Kitchen Witch



BLENDER : Mingling with others, Stirring up energy
COOKBOOK : Book of Shadows, Excellence, Virtue
COOKIE TIN : Sweet things in life, Pleasure
CRISPER : Invigoration and Restoration
CUPBOARDS : Savings, Supplies, Providence
DISH TOWEL : Stricture, Determined precision
DISHWASHER : Leisure, The Water Element, Convenience
DRAIN : Troubles, Burdens, Bad habits
DRAWERS : Hidden matters, Material goods
FOOD WRAP : Prudence, Conservation, Control, Secrets
FORK : Piercing, Penetrating, Perception
FUNNEL : Flow, Unhindered order, Coaxing energy along
KNIFE : Cutting away, Sharpness of mind, Separation
MEASURING CUP : Evaluation, Allotment, Caution
MICROWAVE : Acceleration, Legal expedition
OVEN : Passion, Fertility, Fire Element
OVEN BURNERS : The Four Directions/Elements
OVEN FAN : The Air Element, Movement, Clearing vision
PITCHER : Abundance, Invigoration, Refreshment
REFRIGERATOR : Cooling temper, Preservation, Protection
ROLLING PIN : Discipline, Moderation, Control
SIFTER : Sorting out confusion, Organization, Filtering negativity
SPATULA : Sensibility, Recycling, Changing directions
STEAMER : Slow processes, Even temperament
TEA KETTLE : Divination, Alertness, Kinship, Health
THERMOMETER : Observations Skills, Analysis
WHISK : Excitement, Increasing bounty
WINDOW : Winds of change, Refreshment, Vital energy

Foods and Their Magickal Associations

Fruits, Vegetables and Greens

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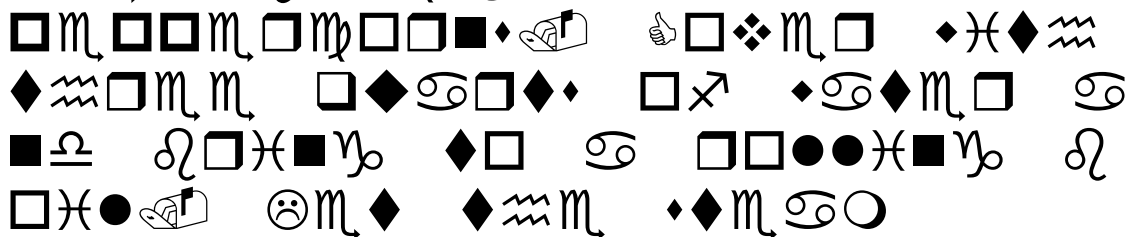
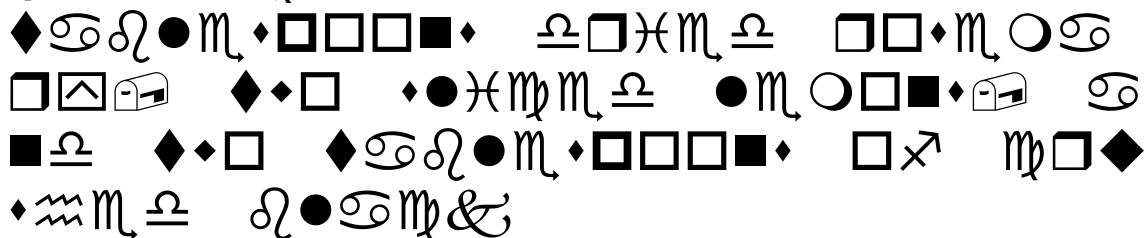
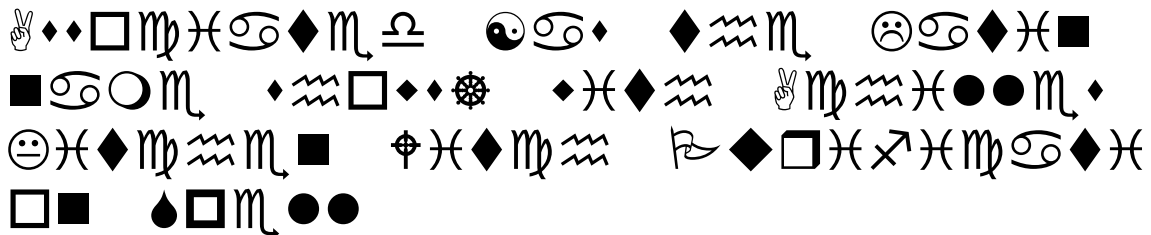
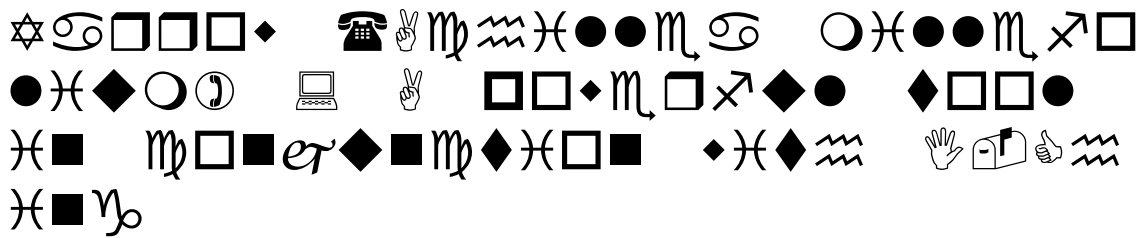
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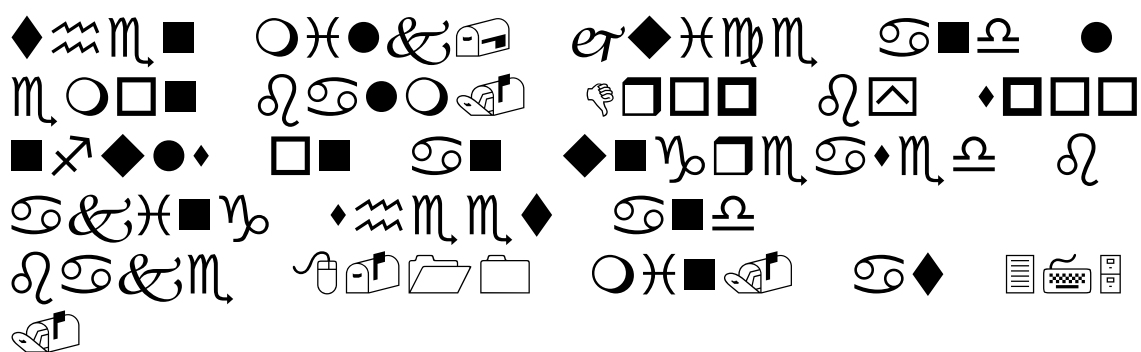
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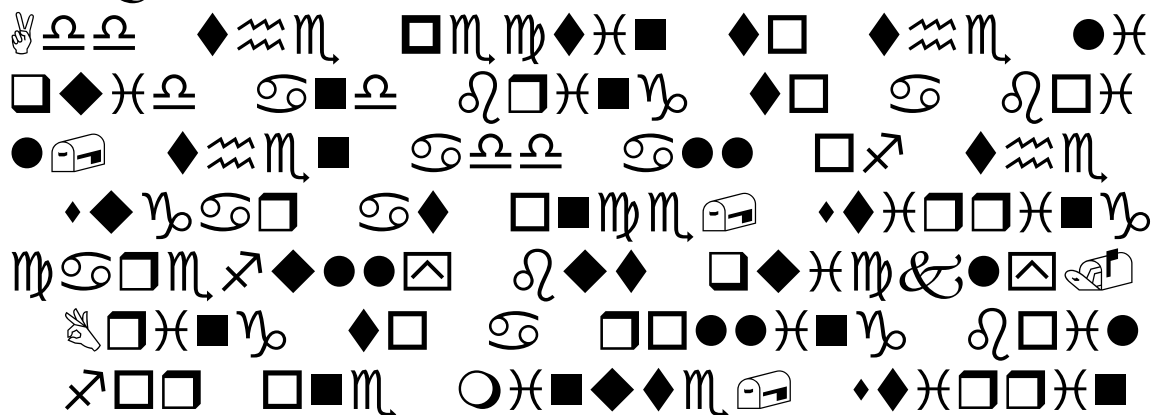
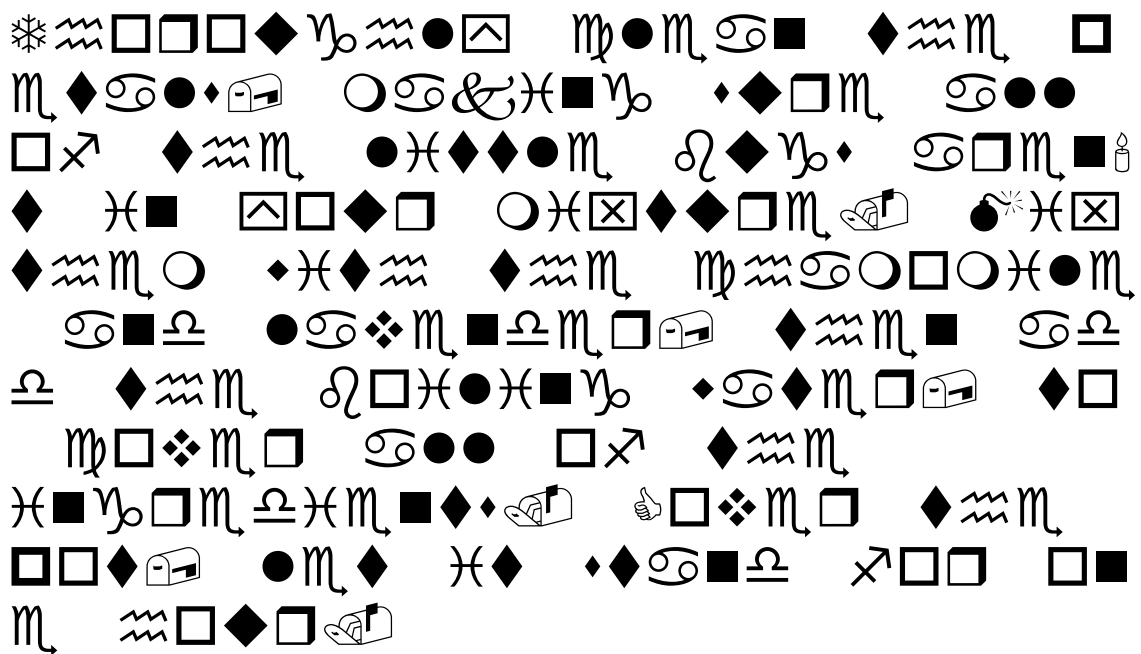
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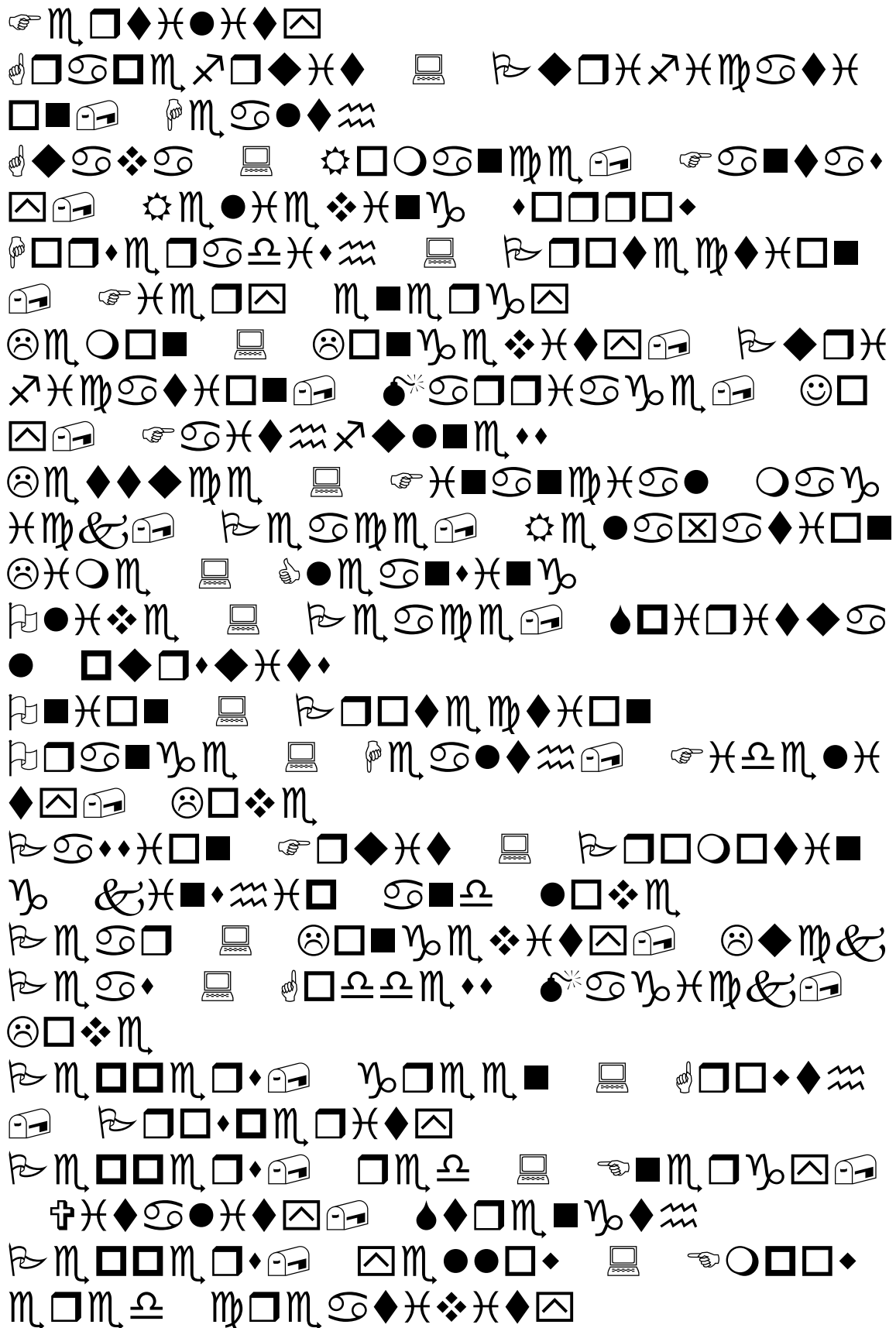




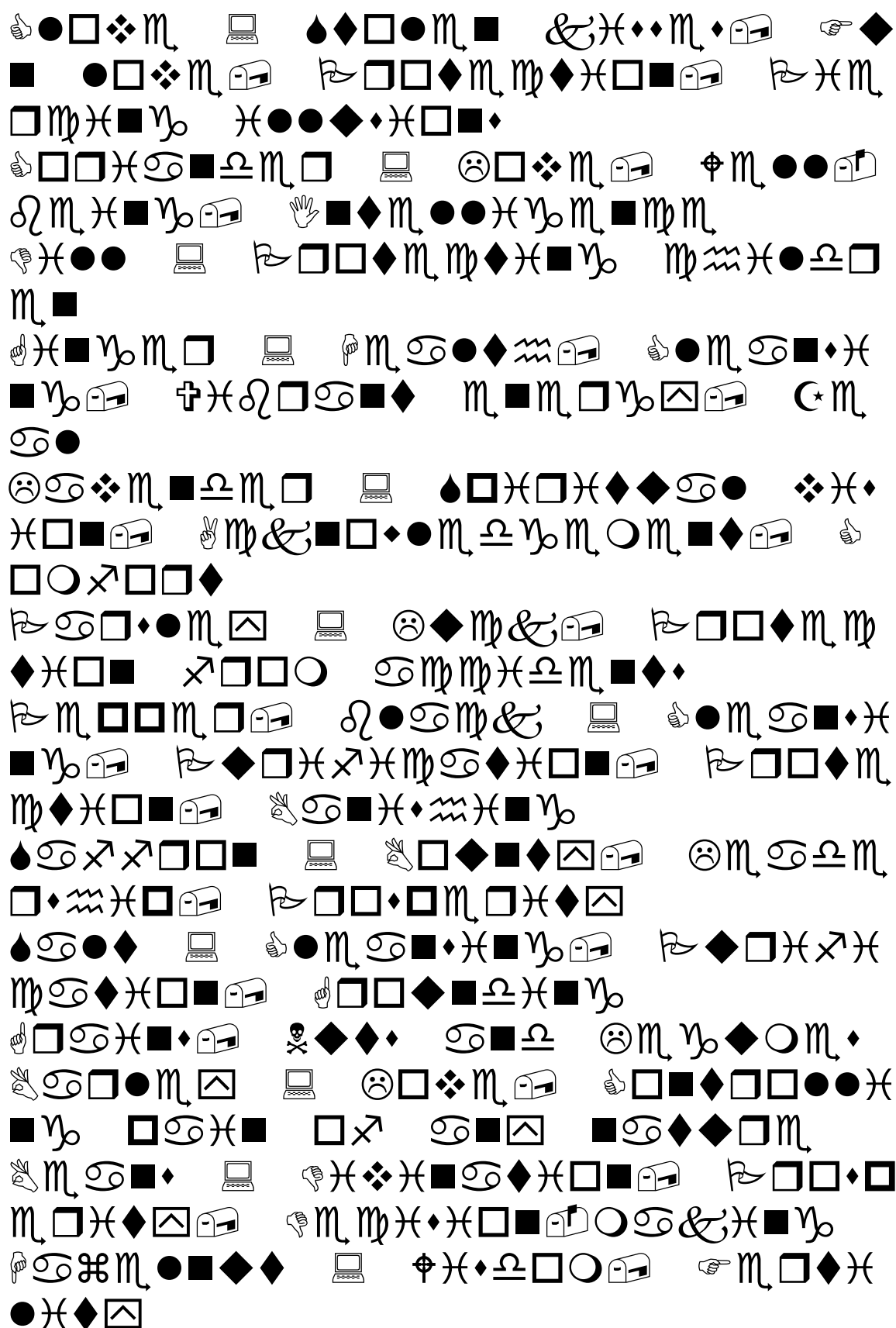






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Cauldron Magick

In contemporary Witchcraft, the cauldron is an important magical tool that symbolically combines influences of the ancient elements of air, fire, water, and earth. Its shape is representative of Mother Nature, and the three legs upon which it stands correspond to the three aspects of the Triple Goddess, the three lunar phases (waxing, full and waning), and to three as a magical number. Additionally, the cauldron is a symbol of transformation (both physical and spiritual), enlightenment, wisdom, the womb, of the Mother Goddess, and rebirth.

Since early times, cauldrons have been used not only for boiling water and cooking food, but for heating magical brews, poisons, and healing potions. They have also been utilized by alchemists and by Witches as tools of divination, containers for sacred fires and incense, and holy vessels for offerings to the gods of old.

If a large cauldron is needed in a ritual, it is generally placed next to the altar, on either side. Small cauldrons, such as ones used for burning of incense, can be placed on top of the altar.

In Middle Ages, most of the population believed that all Witches possessed a large black cauldron in which poisonous brews and vile hell-broths were routinely concocted. These mixtures were said to have contained such ingredients as bat's blood, serpent's venom, headless toads, the eyes of newts, and a gruesome assortment of animal and human body parts, as well as deadly herbs and roots.

In fourteenth-century Ireland, a Witch known as Lady Alice Kyteler was said to have used the enchanted skull of a beheaded thief as her cauldron. Also in the fourteenth century, a male Witch by the name of William Lord Soulis was convicted in Scotland for a number of sorcery-related offenses. His peculiar form of execution was death by being boiled alive in a huge cauldron.

According to an old legend, if a sorceress dumped the vile contents of her cauldron into the sea, a great tempest would be stirred up.

Ancient Irish folklore is rich with tales of wondrous cauldrons that never run out of food at a feast, while an old Gypsy legend told of a brave hero who was boiled in a cauldron filled with the milk of man-eating mares.

It is said that bad luck will befall any Witch who brews a potion in a cauldron belonging to another. If the lid is accidentally left off the cauldron while a magical brew is prepared, this portends the arrival of a stranger, according to a superstitious belief from Victorian-era England.

The cauldron and its powers are associated with many goddesses from pre-Christian faiths, including Hecate (the protectress of all Witches), Demeter/Persephone (in the Eleusinian mysteries), the Greek enchantresses Circe and Medea, Siris (the Babylonian goddess of fate and mother of the stars, whose cauldron was made of lapis lazuli), the Celtic goddess Cerridwen, from whose cauldron bubbled forth the gifts of wisdom and inspiration.

Although the cauldron has traditionally been a symbol of the divine feminine since the earliest of times, there exist a number of male deities from various Pagan pantheons who also have a connection to it. Among them are the Norse god Odin (who acquired his shape-shifting powers by drinking from the cauldron of wise blood), the Hindu sky god Indra (whose myth is similar to Odin's), Bran the Blessed (the Welsh god of the sacred cauldron), and Cernunnos (the Celtic horned god who was dismembered and boiled in a cauldron to be reborn).



Depicted on the famous Gundestrup cauldron (circa 100 B.C.) is the stag-horned Cernunnos in various scenes with different animals. Believed by many to be of Celtic origin, this large silver cauldron may have once been used in sacrificial rites.

The use of sacrificial cauldrons can be traced to the ancient religious and magical practices of various European cultures, as well as to some shamanic traditions. Human and animal victims would first be beheaded over the cauldrons and then have their blood drained out into the cauldron, where it would be boiled to produce a mystical substance. Among the Celts, a potion of inspiration was said to have been brewed in such a manner by the priestess of the lunar goddess.

The cauldron is linked to the Holy Grail - a chalice that is believed by Christians to have been used by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper. However, prior to its incorporation into Christian myth in the twelfth century, the Grail belonged to British paganism as a symbol of reincarnation and the divine womb of the Goddess.

The Cauldron of Cerridwen

Cerridwen, a deity associated with the feminine symbols of water and the Moon, is the shape-shifting Celtic Goddess of inspiration, wisdom, and the magical arts of enchantment, divination, and prophecy. She possesses the three aspects of the maiden, mother, and crone, and is a goddess whose invocation is a significant aspect of both the initiatory and mystery rites of Celtic magic.

In her mysterious cauldron, according to ancient Celtic legend, Cerridwen prepared a potion of enlightenment for her son that consisted of the yellow flowers of the cowslip, fluxwort, hedgeberry, vervain, the berries of the mistletoe (a plant sacred to the Druids), and the foam of the ocean. It was warmed by the breath of nine maidens, and required brewing for a year and a day.

A youth named Gwion drank three drops of the potion, causing the rest of

the brew to turn into poison and destroy the cauldron. To hide from the angry goddess, he used his newly-acquired shape-shifting powers to change himself into a grain of wheat. However, Cerridwen transformed herself into a black hen and devoured him.



Cauldron Spirit

Many Witches pour a bit of ordinary surgical spirit (rubbing alcohol) into their cast iron cauldrons and light it carefully dropping in a lit match. This is often done as part of healing rituals, invocations to the elemental spirit of fire, scrying divinations, sabbat fire festivals, and various working rituals. (Note: A quarter cup of alcohol will burn for approximately three minutes.) Be sure that the cauldron is resting securely on a fireproof stand and is not close to any flammable substances. Do not touch the cauldron while it is hot unless you cover your hands with protective oven mitts. If the fire must be extinguished before it burns itself out, smother it by covering the cauldron with a lid or by sprinkling salt or sand over the flames. Remember, whenever working with the element of fire, use caution and common sense, and respect the spirits of the flame.

The sight of a cauldron blazing with fire can be very magical and mesmerizing, and when the alcohol has been steeped in aromatic herbs, a sweet but gentle incense-like fragrance is produced. To make an herbal cauldron spirit, put a small bunch of any or all of the following into a glass bottle: fresh lavender flowers and leaves, fresh mint leaves, fresh rosemary flowers and leaves, and fresh thyme flowers and leaves. Fill the bottle to the top with the alcohol, cap it tightly, and then give it a good shake. Keep it in a cool place for thirteen days, shaking it twice daily (every sunrise and moonrise). Strain it through a double thickness of muslin into clear bottle. Cap it and store it away from heat and flame. Cauldron spirit will keep indefinitely.

Cauldron Divination

Divination is an art that has been practiced in one form or another since the ancient times and in all levels of culture.

There are a number of ways in which a cauldron can be used for divining. One method is to fill the cauldron with water or wine and place it between two burning candles or under the bright silver rays of the Full Moon. Relax, clear your mind of all distracting thoughts, and then gaze into the cauldron as you would a crystal ball. As with other forms of scrying, your vision will

begin to blur after a while and a slight haze will begin to materialize. Keep your gaze focused and eventually a vision, either of an actual or symbolic nature, may be revealed to you.

To determine good or bad omens, according to an old Pagan method, place a cauldron on the ground and burn some incense (traditionally frankincense) or a handful of dried herbs in it. Mugwort, rose petals, vervain, and yarrow are popular herbs of divination among Witches. If the smoke rises straight up to the heavens, this indicates a good omen. If it does not rise or if it touched the ground, this indicates a bad one.

Candle Making Ingredients

Wax

The most common types of wax used in candle making are beeswax, paraffin wax, and dip-and-carve wax.

Beeswax is an all natural wax with a sweet aroma. It is preferred because it adds softness and beauty to candles and it also increases burning time. It is also more expensive.

Beeswax comes in one-pound cakes or sheets. The sheets are sometimes used for making rolled candles. The rectangular sheets measure about 8 x 16 inches

and are available in natural taupe, bleached white, and various dyed colors.

Beeswax can be used alone or combined with other waxes. Adding beeswax to other commonly used waxes will both soften colors and enhance burning time.

When using beeswax remember that it is naturally sticky. When making molded candles you will want to treat the mold with a releasing agent (such as silicone spray) to make it easier to remove the candle. Also, keeping the temperature above 160° F when you pour the candle will help to keep it from sticking as much.

When you are using 100% beeswax to make candles there is no need to add opaque crystals (beeswax is naturally opaque) or stearin to your candles. These two ingredients are listed below.

Paraffin wax is less expensive and more widely available than other types of wax. It is the primary ingredient in most molded candles. Because it is colorless and odorless it is also used more when adding dyes and fragrances. It is also harder than bees wax and produces a candle with a sheen. When combining bees wax and paraffin wax use a ratio of one part bees wax to ten parts paraffin wax. You should not have any problems with sticking when using this small amount of bees wax.

Paraffin comes in ten or twelve-pound blocks or in

granular form. You can also buy it with ten percent stearin already added. You can also find different types of paraffin wax, classified by the temperature at which it melts and the pliability of the wax at room temperature. For most candle making projects it is best to get paraffin wax that melts at 135° F to 140° F but you will still need to melt the wax to 160° F or more for most recipes. The exact temperature depends on the candle making method you are using, the type of mold and the effect that you want to achieve.

Dip-and-carve wax is a little softer than paraffin wax. This quality keeps it from cracking when it is carved. It is also better for dipped candles. The softer wax helps the layers adhere to each other better.

Wick

The wick is a conduct that supplies the flame with a steady stream of wax. The best wicks to use are made with tightly woven cotton fibers. Wicks come in rolls or pre-cut lengths. Although they are made of cotton most will be treated with substances that allow the wick to burn along with the wax.

There are three types of wicks: flat braid for dipped candles, square braid for molded and rolled candles, and wire-core for long-burning candles such as container candles. Be sure to choose the right wick for the candle you are making. The width of the

candle determines the thickness of the wick. If your wick is too thin for the candle it will not supply enough wax to the flame and your candle will not stay lit. If the wick is too thick it will flood the flame with melted wax. The package that the wick comes in will suggest the best candle-diameter.

If your not sure here are some guidelines:

- Candles 3/4 inch in diameter or less use 4/0
- Candles 3/4 - 2 inches use 2/0
- Candles 2 - 3 inches use a #1
- Candles 3 - 4 inches use a #2
- Candles over 4 inches use a #3

Wick holders

These are small squares of metal with a hole in the middle. They are used to anchor the wick to the bottom of container candles. Insert the wick into the hole and pinch the holder together to hold the wick in place.

Candle Making Equipment

Double Boiler

Using a double boiler will help to keep your wax from reaching too high of temperatures. After use you can clean the top of the double boiler by wiping it with a dry dish towel before the wax residue hardens.

Cookie Sheet

A cookie sheet or baking pan can be a very useful

piece of candle making equipment. You will need it for laying out primed wicks, salvaging unused wax, and creating homemade wax sheets. You will want one or more with high sides - about 3/4 of an inch - so it will hold wax.

Dipping Can

A dipping can is used to hold the hot wax when you dip or over dip candles. You can buy a dipping can at a craft shop or you can find a tall narrow pot to use. Be sure that it is at least 2 inches taller than the candle you want to make. Set the can in a pan of boiling water to keep the wax at a consistent temperature.

Thermometer

A thermometer is a very important tool in candle making. You need to reach and maintain the right temperature to make beautiful candles. You can use a candy or cooking thermometer. Make sure it registers between

100° F and 225° F.

Scale

You will need a scale for weighing wax and other materials. You can use a kitchen scale found at department stores or a postal scale available at office supply stores.

Molds

You can find a wide variety of candle molds at most craft stores. You can also use your creativity and look

for other items that can be used as molds or containers. Tin cans, jello molds, cake pans, sea shells, etc.

Wicking Needles

These are heavy duty steel needles that come in four to ten inch lengths. They are used at various stages of candle making. They are used to wick an already molded candle. They can be used as tie rods to hold the wick in place when making molded candles.

Misc. Items

- Stirrer - A wooden spoon or chop stick to mix in dye or scents and to stir the wax.
- Cutting tools - A sharp craft knife to cut beewax sheets and trim wicks.
- Pouring Pot - A pot for pouring melted wax into molds.
- Heat source - A heat source is needed for melting the wax. A stove, camp stove or hot plate will work fine.
- Pot holders, waxed paper, silicone spray and mold seal are also good to have on hand.

Making Molded Candles

Molded candles can be made in all sorts of shapes and sizes. There is the basic molded candle removed from the mold. You can make a container candle where the candle is left in the mold and the mold

becomes part of the candle. A pretty tin can, a sea shell, a hollowed out tree branch, an egg shell or a glass dish are just a few of the containers you can use. See the note below these instructions to make a container candle. This recipe makes one 7 x 2 inch pillar.

You will need:

- A 9 inch length of #1 wick. If you did not buy a preprimed wick then you need to prime it before you start. You can do this by dipping the length of wick into melted paraffin wax for about 20 seconds. Lay it straight on a waxed paper lined cookie sheet to dry.
- 1/2 pound of bees wax or 1/2 pound of paraffin. If you use paraffin instead of bees wax you will also need 0.8 ounces of stearin. If you plan to scent or color the candle use the paraffin and add the scent (just a couple of drops) and or color to the melted stearin before adding the paraffin.
- One 7 x 2 inch mold.

To prepare the mold ensure that it is clean and dry. Spray a bit of silicon spray inside the mold to make it easier to unmold the candle. Thread the wick through the hole in the bottom of the mold and pull it up to the top. Tie the top of the wick to a wicking needle and rest it on top of the mold. This forms a "tie rod". Turn the mold over, center the wick, pull it taut, and

secure it with plenty of mold seal. Seal up any cracks in the mold with mold seal.

In the top of a double boiler over medium heat, melt the bees wax and bring it to a temperature of 160° F. If you are using paraffin wax add the stearin first and bring to a temperature of 190° F. Remember that different mold materials call for different wax temperatures. If a different temperature is called for on the mold you are using go by that temperature.

When the wax has become heated to the correct temperature, transfer it to a pouring pot. Be sure to have your mold at room temperature or warmer before pouring the wax into the mold. If the mold is cool it will cause the wax to harden unevenly.

To pour the wax hold the mold at an angle (this helps to prevent the formation of air bubbles) and as it fills gradually tip the mold back up. Fill to about a 1/2 inch from the top of the mold. Gently stir the wax in the mold with a narrow stick or wicking needle, scraping the sides of the mold. This will help to release any trapped air bubbles and ensures that the wax hardens more uniformly. Cool the candle for about an hour.

While the wax is cooling it may shrink causing a slight indent to form around the wick. To fix this take a wicking needle and make several pricks in the indent. Heat the wax to the temperature you used previously and refill the indent. This is called

"topping off" Continue to let the candle cool for another 30 minutes to an hour. If needed top off the candle again until you achieve a level surface. After the candle has cooled for 6 to 8 hours and has begun to pull away from the sides of the mold you can unmold it. Place the candle in the refrigerator for about 20 minutes to shrink the wax. Remove the mold seal from the bottom of the mold, then using the tie rod pull the candle out of the mold. Remove the tie rod and turn the candle over. Cut the wick off just below the surface of the bottom of the candle. To level the bottom of the candle, heat a pan lined with foil until it is very hot. Place the candle on the hot foil and rotate for a few seconds until the base is even. Finally trim the wick to 1/4 inch and you are ready to light it.

NOTE: If you are making a container candle use a wire core wick and wick holder. Anchor it to the bottom of the container by pouring in enough wax to fill the first 1/2 inch of the container. When the wax has cooled wrap the end of the wick around a tie rod and rest the rod on the top of the container. Take up any slack in the wick and center it. Fill with wax and top off as directed above.

Making Dipped Candles

This recipe makes six 10 x 3/4 inch tapers.

You will need:

- 4 pounds of bees wax.
- Three 24-inch lengths of flat-braided 2/0 wick
- A drying rack. You can make a drying rack by hammering pairs of nails into a board or by suspending a dowel or slat between two chairs.

Place a 12-inch dipping can in the bottom of a double boiler over medium heat. Heat the wax to 160° F.

To start dipping your candle pairs drape a wick over 3 fingers so the sides hang separately and evenly. Dip the lower 10 1/2 inches of wick into the wax and hold for 10 seconds. Remove the wick and hang it on a drying rack to dry. This primes the wick and adds the first layer to the candle. Dip the other two lengths of wick the same as the first. Be sure to check the temperature of the wax often to maintain a constant temperature of 160° F. Start with the first pair again and dip only the lower 10 inches of wick to create a 10 inch candle. Repeat again with the other two pairs hanging the pairs on the drying rack each time.

The optimum drying time between dips depends on your work room temperature. The cooler the room, the shorter the drying time. For the best results dip the candles while the previous layer is still tacky.

Continue dipping the candles until they measure 3/4 of an inch in diameter (about 30 dips) then dip once more.

To give the candle a smooth, clean finish, bring the

wax temperature up to 180° F. Dip each pair for 3 seconds. Allow the candles to cool for 4 minutes. Hold the candle with a sheet of waxed paper to keep from leaving imprints. Trim the base of the finished candles with a sharp knife. Return the candles to the drying rack and allow to cool for several hours or over night. Trim the wicks to 1/4 inch and the candles are ready to light.

Making Rolled Candles

Rolled candles are very simple to make. This recipe makes two 8 x 7/8 inch rolled tapers.

You will need:

- One 8 x 16 inch bees wax sheet.
- One 10 inch length of braided 2/0 wick.
- 1 to 2 ounces of paraffin wax for priming the wick. You can prime the wick as directed in the recipe for molded candles.

Using a ruler as a guide and a craft knife, cut the bees wax sheet into two 8 inch squares. Use a hairdryer to slightly soften the wax. Be careful not to over soften the wax.

Press the wick into one of the edges of a wax square, leaving 1 inch of wick extending beyond each side. Using a sheet of waxed paper between the bees wax and your fingers, tightly roll up the wax moving the waxed paper along so it does not get caught up in the roll.

When the candle is completely rolled, press the edge of the wax into the candle to seal it. You may need to soften it with the hairdryer. Repeat the process with the second square of wax. Trim the wicks to 1/4 inch and the candles are ready to light.

The Kitchen Witch's Cupboard

Here are a few items for your cupboard to keep on hand.

Altar Cloth
Amulets, Talismans, Jewelry
Athame' or sharp Knife
Baskets
Beads
Bells (brass or glass?)
Book of Shadows
Bowls, Platters, Pitcher
Candles and Holders
Capes and/or Robes



Cauldron
Censor or Thurible
Chalice
Charged, pure water
Compass
Crystals and Gems
Crystal Ball (scrying tools)
Decanter
Divination Tools (tarot, runes, pendulum, etc.)
Earth
Feathers
Felt
Glass jars w/lids
Glue
Herbs, Spices, Dried Plants, Tobacco
Oils (for anointing)
Incense, Burner, Sand, Charcoal
India ink
Lighter
Mortar and Pestle
Mood Music
Needle and Thread
Parchment or Special paper
Pentacles/Pentagrams
Potpourri Pot
Pouches
Rawhide
Rope (witch's cord--Cingulum)

Scales
Scissors
Silk (for wrapping & covering)
Statues
Stencils and Brushes
String
Wands
Wooden Boxes
Wooden Spoons
Writing Instruments of all kinds

The Deities

All religions are structures built upon reverence of Deity. Wicca is no exception. In accordance with the principles of nature, the supreme power was personified into two basic beings: the Goddess and the God.

Wicca reveres these twin deities because of its links with nature. Since most (but certainly not all) nature is divided into gender, the deities embodying it are similarly conceived. In the past, when the Goddess and God were as real as the Moon and the Sun, rites of worship and adoration were unstructured-spontaneous, joyous union with the divine. Later, rituals followed the course of the Sun through its astronomical year as well as the monthly waxing and waning of the Moon.

Today similar rites are observed by the Wicca, and

their regular performance creates a truly magical closeness with these deities and the powers behind them. But we need not wait for ritual occasions to be reminded of the Gods presence. The sight of a perfect blossom in a field of bare earth can instill feelings rivaling those of the most powerful formal rite. Living in nature makes every moment a ritual. The Wiccans are comfortable in communicating with animals, plants and tree. They feel energies within stones and sand, and cause fossils to speak of their primeval beginnings. For some Wiccans, watching the Sun or Moon rise and set each day is a ritual unto itself, for these are the heavenly symbols of the God and Goddess.

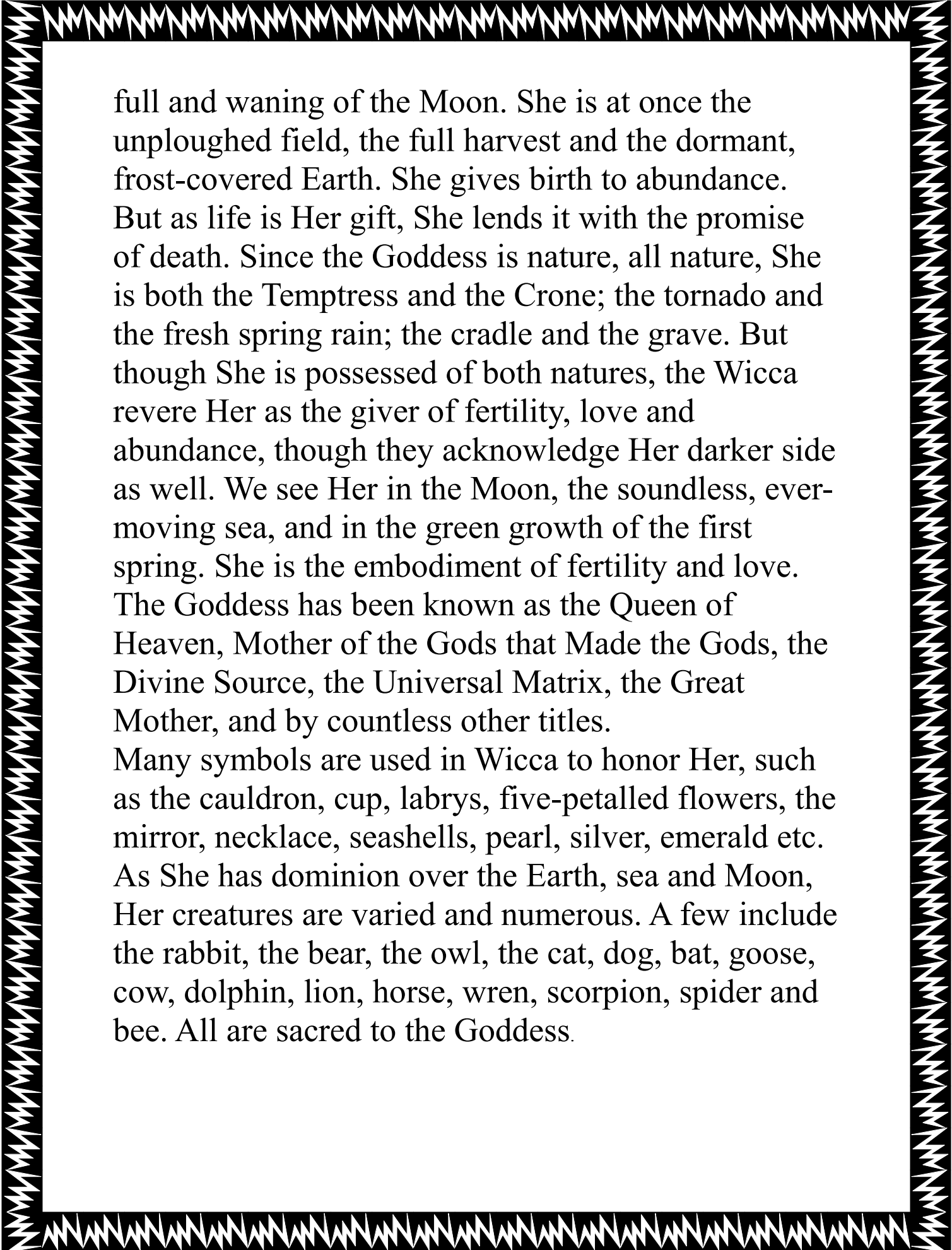
When envisioning the Goddess and God, many of the Wicca see Them as well-know deities from ancient religions. Diana, Pan, Isis, Hermes, Hina, Tammuz, Hecate, Ishtar, Cerridwen, Thoth, Tara, Aradia, Artemis, Pele, Apollo, Kanaloa, Bridget, Helios, Bran, Lugh, Hera, Cybele, Inanna, Maui, Ea, Athena, Lono, Marduck-the list is virtually endless. Many of these deities, with their corresponding histories, rites and mythic information, furnish the concept of deity for Wiccans.

The Goddess and God are equal; neither is higher or more deserving of respect. Religion based entirely on feminine energy, however, is as unbalanced and unnatural as one totally masculine in focus. The ideal

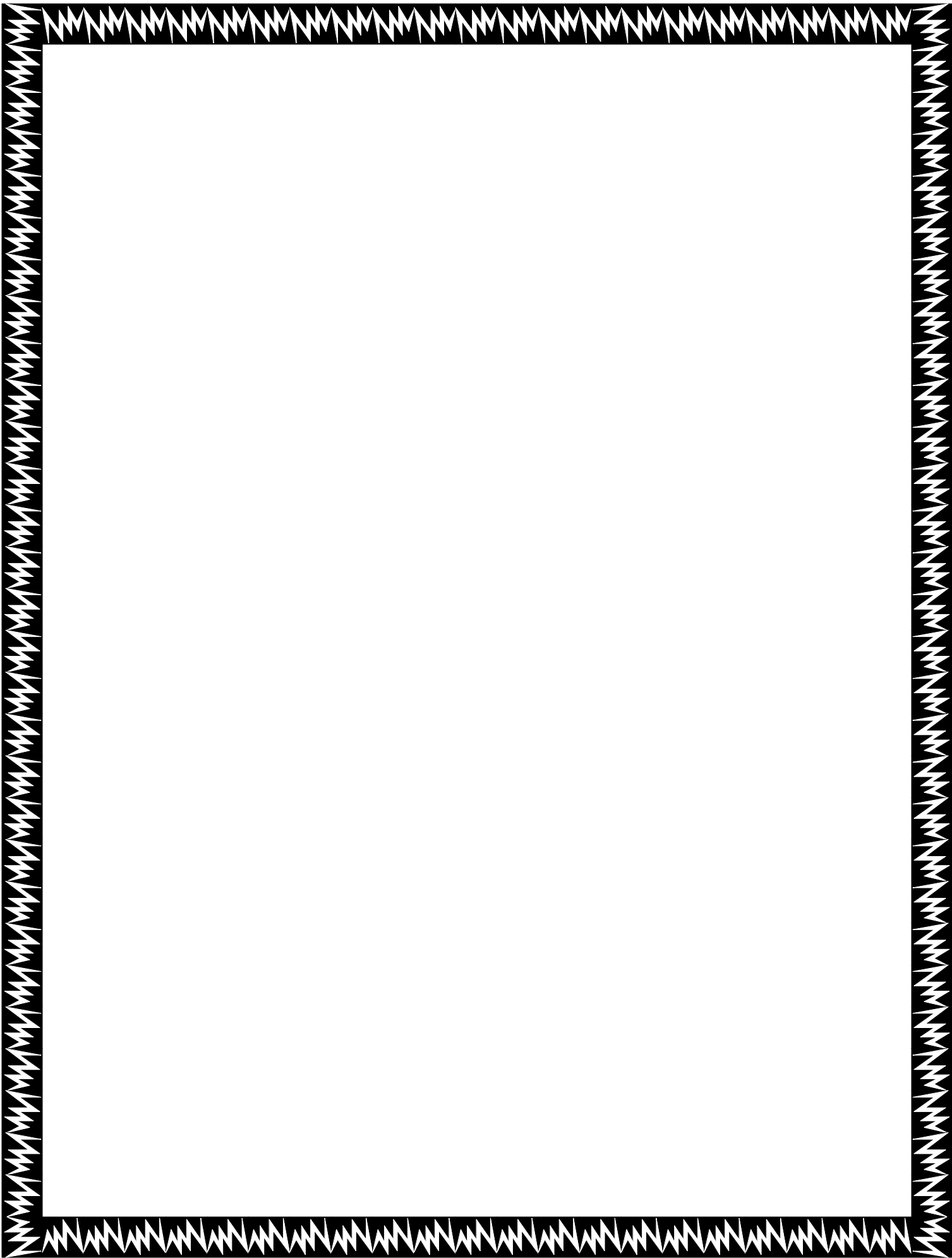
is a perfect balance of the two. The Goddess and God are equal, complementary.

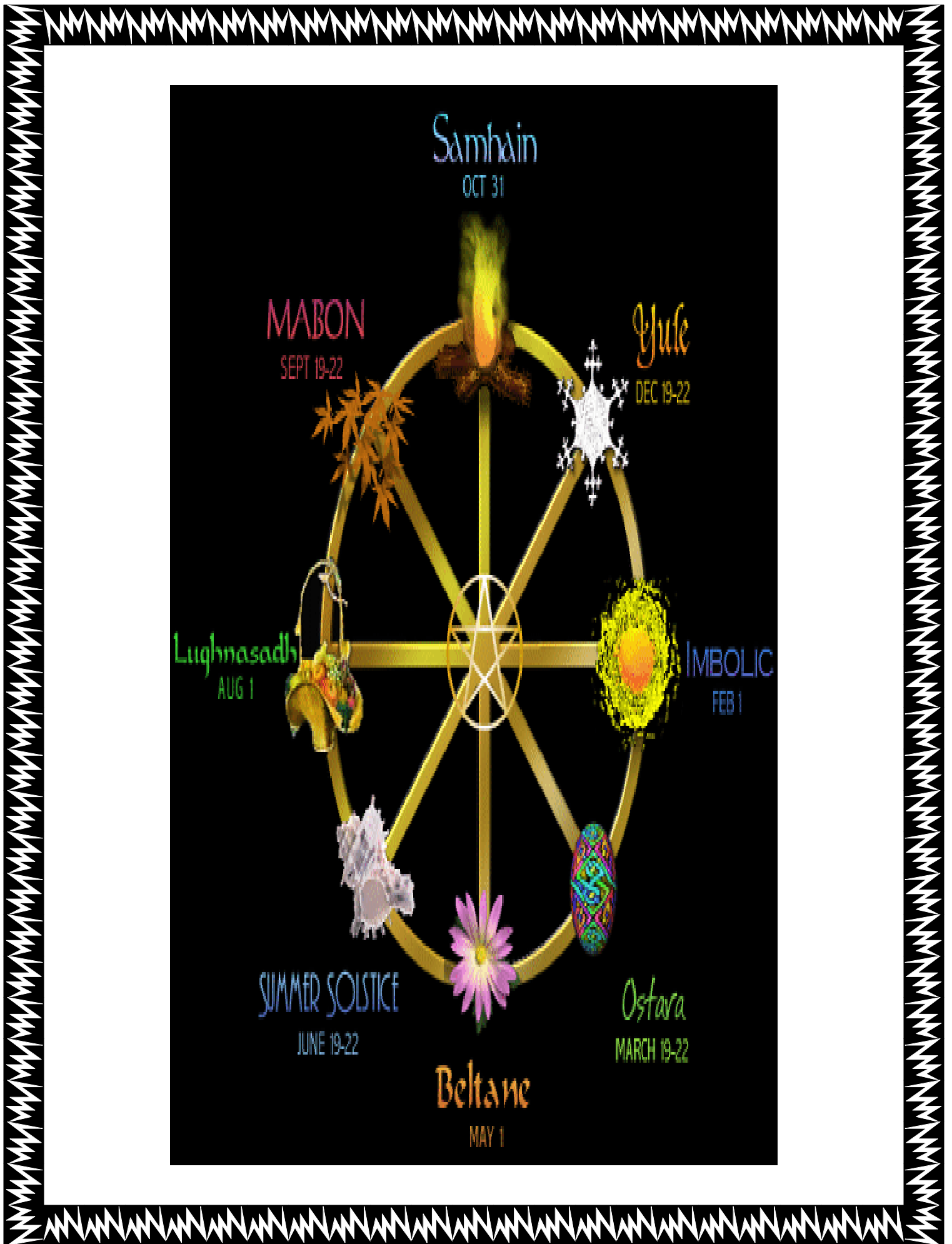


The Goddess is the universal mother. She is the source of fertility, endless wisdom and loving caresses. She is often of three aspects: the Maiden, the Mother and the Crone, symbolized in the waxing,



full and waning of the Moon. She is at once the unploughed field, the full harvest and the dormant, frost-covered Earth. She gives birth to abundance. But as life is Her gift, She lends it with the promise of death. Since the Goddess is nature, all nature, She is both the Temptress and the Crone; the tornado and the fresh spring rain; the cradle and the grave. But though She is possessed of both natures, the Wicca revere Her as the giver of fertility, love and abundance, though they acknowledge Her darker side as well. We see Her in the Moon, the soundless, ever-moving sea, and in the green growth of the first spring. She is the embodiment of fertility and love. The Goddess has been known as the Queen of Heaven, Mother of the Gods that Made the Gods, the Divine Source, the Universal Matrix, the Great Mother, and by countless other titles. Many symbols are used in Wicca to honor Her, such as the cauldron, cup, labrys, five-petalled flowers, the mirror, necklace, seashells, pearl, silver, emerald etc. As She has dominion over the Earth, sea and Moon, Her creatures are varied and numerous. A few include the rabbit, the bear, the owl, the cat, dog, bat, goose, cow, dolphin, lion, horse, wren, scorpion, spider and bee. All are sacred to the Goddess.





Samhain

OCT 31

MABON

SEPT 19-22

Yule

DEC 19-22

Lughnasadh

AUG 1

IMBOLIC

FEB 1

SUMMER SOLSTICE

JUNE 19-22

Ostara

MARCH 19-22

Beltane

MAY 1

YULE

December 20-23: Yule, also called Winter Solstice, is the first day of winter, and its when we experience the longest night of the year. It is the celebration of the rebirth of the Sun, and it honors the Horned God. Its time to reflect on ones life and give thanks. The Goddess gives birth to a son, the God, at Yule.

Wiccans sometimes celebrate Yule just before dawn, then watch the Sun rise as fitting finale to their efforts. Since the God is also the Sun, this marks the point of the year when the Sun is reborn as well.

Thus, the Wicca light fires or candles to welcome the Suns returning light. The Goddess, slumbering through the winter of Her labor, rests after Her delivery. This holiday will fall somewhere between the dates above and varies from year to year depending on when the Sun reaches the southern most point in its yearly trek.

Herbs

Holly, Mistletoe, Rosemary, Oak, Pine Cones

Incence

Bayberry, Pine, Cedar, Rosemary, Juniper

Color

Red, Green, White, Silver, Gold

Decorations

Yule log (Oak or Pine), Mistletoe, Wreaths, Strings of dried flowers and cinnamon sticks, Apples, Oranges, Yule tree

Foods

Nuts, Apples, Oranges, Caraway rolls, Mulled wine,
Roast turkey

Imbolc

February 1: Imbolc (Imbolg), marks the recovery of the Goddess after giving birth to the God. The lengthening periods of light awaken Her. The God is a young, lusty boy, but His power is felt in the longer days. The warmth fertilizes the Earth (the Goddess), causes seeds to germinate and sprout. And so the earliest beginnings of spring occur. This is a Sabbat of purification after the shut-in life of winter, through the renewing power of the Sun. Also known as Feast of Torches, Oimelec, Lupercalia, Feast of Pan, Snowdrop Festival, Feast of the Waxing Light, Brigid's day and by many others. This is a time of new beginnings and growth. At this time, think of your goals and dreams for this year that you will plant, for just around the corner the Goddess will be giving birth to spring. This is one of the traditional times for initiations into covens, and so self-dedication rituals can be performed or renewed at this time.

Herbs

Snowdrop, Bay, Heather, First Flowers of the Year

Incense

Rosemary, Cinnamon, Westeria, Frankincense

Color

White, Orange, Red

Decorations

Lamps, Besom (Witch's Broom), Yellow Flowers

Foods

Dairy Products, Onions, Garlic, Spiced Wines, Seeds,
Herbal Teas

March 20-23: Ostara: the Spring Equinox, also known as Spring, Rites of Spring and Eostra Day, marks the first day of true spring. The energies of

nature subtly shift from the sluggishness of winter to the exuberant expansion of spring. The Goddess blankets the Earth with fertility, bursting forth from Her sleep, as the God stretches and grows to maturity. He walks the greening fields and delights in the abundance of nature. On Ostara the hours of day and night are equal. Light is overtaking darkness; the Goddess and God impel the wild creatures of the Earth to reproduce. This is a time of beginnings, of action, of planting spells for future gains, and of tending ritual gardens.

Herbs

Honeysuckle, Iris, Peony, Violet and All Spring Flowers

Incense

Jasmine, Rose, Strawberry

Color

Green, Yellow

Decorations

Colored Eggs, Green and Yellow Jellybeans, Rabbit Decorations, Spring Flowers

Foods

Seeds, Leafy Green Vegetables, Spiced or Flower Cupcakes, Fruits, Hard-Boiled Eggs

May 1: Beltane, marks the emergence of the young

God into manhood. Stirred by the energies at work in nature, He desires the Goddess. They fall in love, lie among the grasses and blossoms, and unite. The Goddess becomes pregnant of the God. The Wiccans celebrate the symbol of Her fertility in ritual. Beltane (also known as May Day) has long been marked with feasts and rituals. May poles, supremely phallic symbols, were the focal point of old English village rituals. Many persons rose at dawn to gather flowers and green branches from the fields and gardens, using them to decorate the May pole, their homes and themselves. The flowers and greenery symbolize the Goddess; the May pole the God. Beltane marks the return of vitality, of passion and hopes consummated.

Herbs

Honeysuckle, St. John's Wort, Hawthorn, All Flowers

Incense

Frankincense, Lilac, Rose

Color

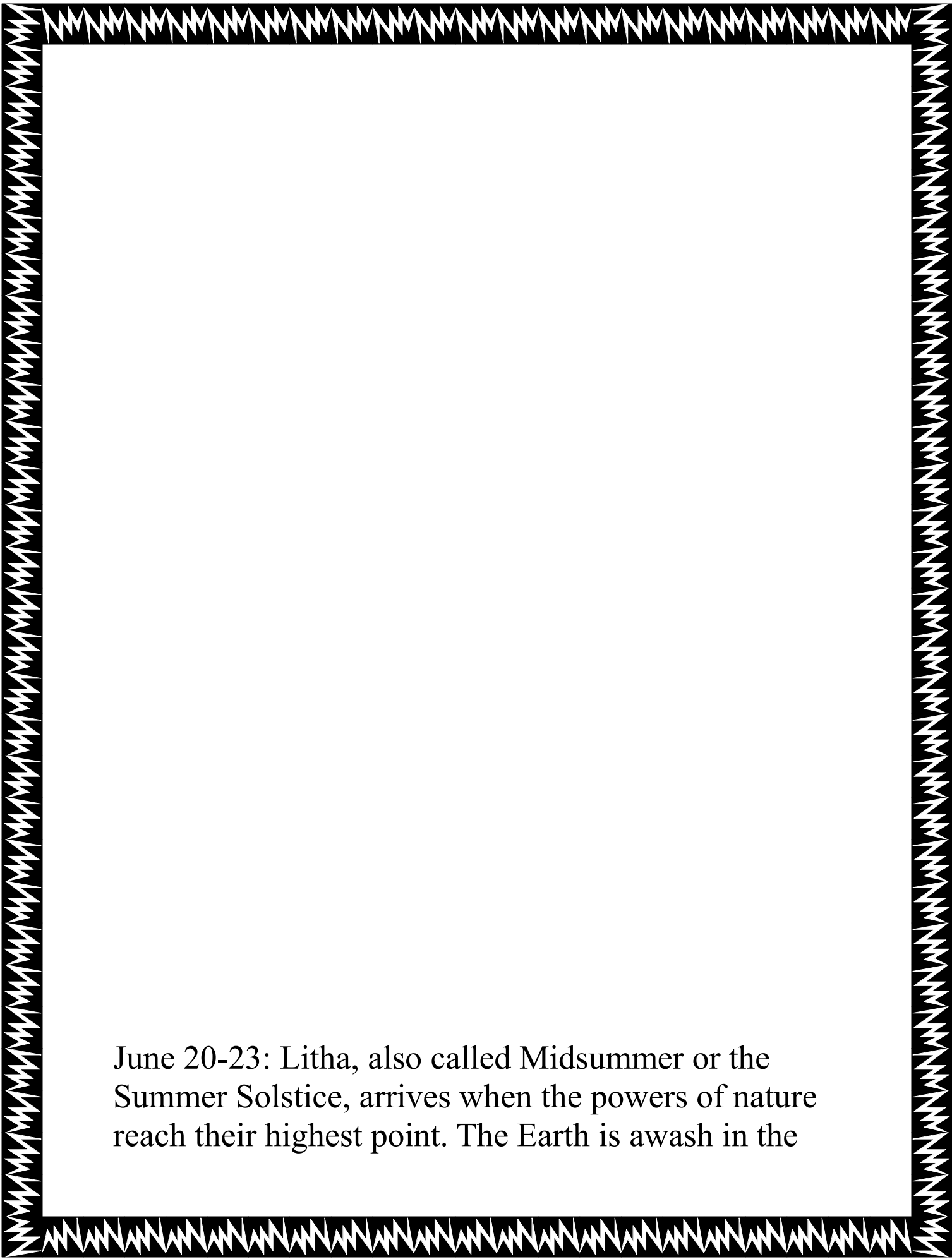
Green, Soft Pink, Blue, Yellow

Decorations

Maypole, Strings of Beads or Flowers, Ribbons,
Spring Flowers

Foods

Dairy, Oatmeal cakes, Cherries, Strawberries, Wine
Punches, Green Salads



June 20-23: Litha, also called Midsummer or the Summer Solstice, arrives when the powers of nature reach their highest point. The Earth is awash in the

fertility of the Goddess and God. In the past, bonfires were leapt to encourage fertility, purification, health and love,, The fire once again represents the Sun, feted on this time of the longest daylight hours. Midsummer is a classic time for magic of all kinds. This is also a major time for the Faery, and a festival called the Feast of the Faery is held. It is believed by some that the portals between worlds open, and the faery folk may pass into our world at twilight on this day. Introspectively, this is a time to look at the "seeds" you've planted in yourself. Are your goals at full bloom? It will fall somewhere between the dates above depending on when the Sun is at its northern most point.

Herbs

Lavender, Chamomile, Roses, Daisy, Lily

Incense

Frankincense, Lemon, Rose, Wisteria, Lavender

Color

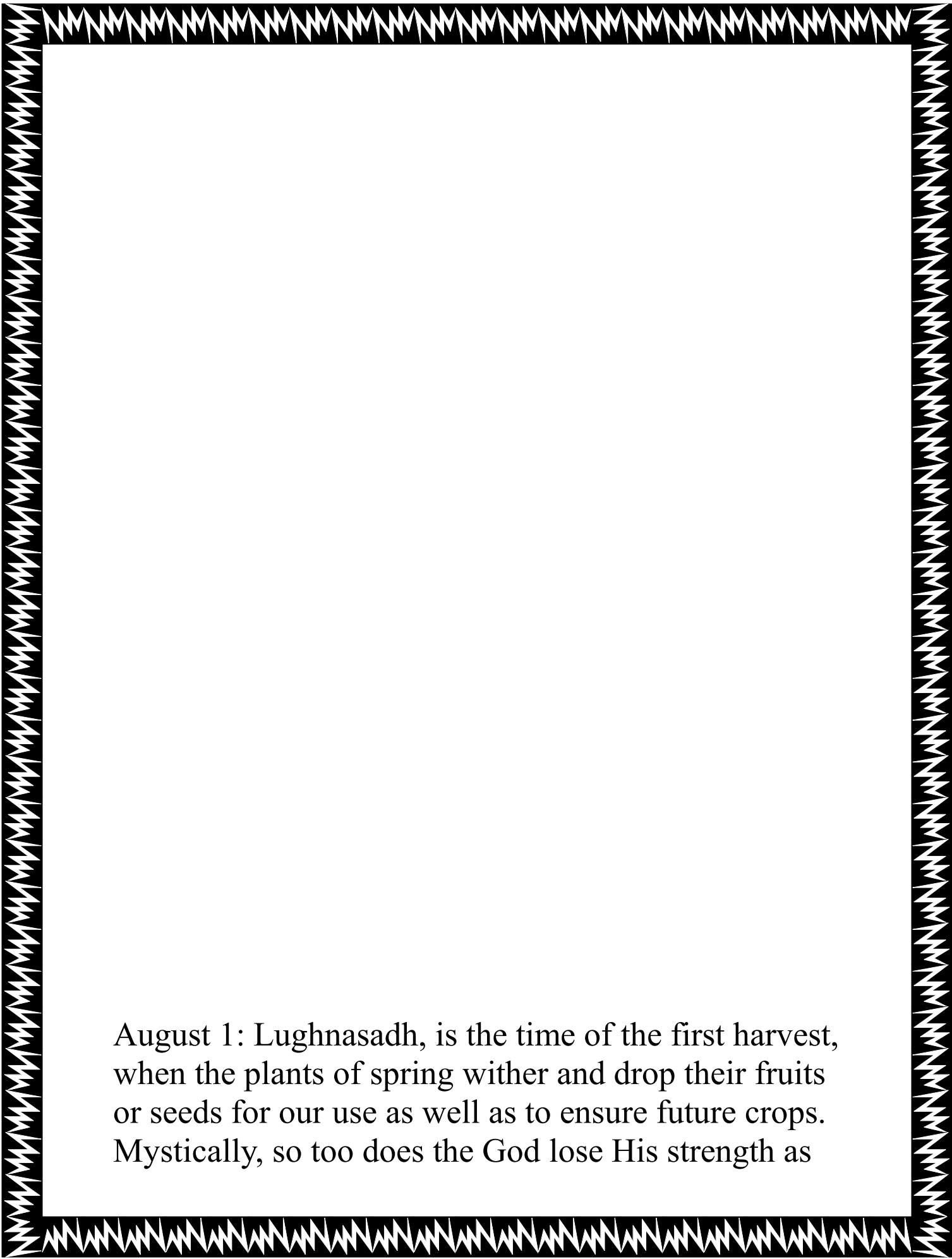
Blue, Green, Yellow

Decorations

Dried Herbs, Potpourri, Seashells, Summer Flowers, Fruits

Foods

Summer Fruits, Ale, Mead, Fresh Vegetables



August 1: Lughnasadh, is the time of the first harvest, when the plants of spring wither and drop their fruits or seeds for our use as well as to ensure future crops. Mystically, so too does the God lose His strength as

the Sun rises farther in the South each day and the nights grow longer. The Goddess watches in sorrow and joy as She realizes that the God is dying, and yet lives on inside Her as Her child. Lughnasadh, also known as August Eve, Feast of Bread, Harvest Home and Lamma, was not necessarily observed on this day. It originally coincided with the first reaping. As summer passes, Wiccans remember its warmth and bounty in the food we eat. Every meal is an act of attunement with nature, and we are reminded that nothing in the universe is constant.

Herbs

All grains, Grapes, Heather, Blackberries, Sunflowers

Incense

Sandalwood, Rose, Aloes

Color

Yellow, Orange, Green, Brown

Decorations

Corn Dollies, Any Wheat Weaving Crafts, Shafts of Grain

Foods

Breads, Cider, Blackberry Pies and Jellies, Rice, Meadowsweet Tea, Berries

September 20-23: Mabon, or the Fall or Autumnal Equinox, is the celebration of the end of the harvests. Once again day and night are equal, poised as the

God prepares to leave His physical body and begin the great adventure into the unseen, toward renewal and rebirth of the Goddess. Nature declines, draws back its bounty, readying for winter and its time of rest. The Goddess nods in the weakening Sun, though fire burns within Her womb. She feels the presence of the God even as He wanes.

Herbs

Hazel, Corn, Acorns, Oak, Wheat Stalks, Cypress Cones, Pine Cones

Incense

Myrrh, Sage, Pine

Color

Orange, Dark Red, Yellow, Brown

Decorations

Acorns, Pomegranates, Pine Cones, Baskets of Fallen Leaves

Foods

Breads, Corn, Cornbread, Beans, Squash, Apples, Roots (Carrots, Potatoes, Onions), Cider

October 31: Samhain the Wicca say farewell to the God. This is a temporary farewell. He isn't wrapped in eternal darkness, but readies to be reborn of the

Goddess at Yule. Samhain, also known as November Eve, Feast of the Dead, Feast of Apples, Hallows and All Hallows Eve, once marked the time of sacrifice. In some places this was the time when animals were slaughtered to ensure food throughout the depths of winter. The God-identified with the animals-fell as well to ensure our continuing existence. Samhain is a time of reflection, of looking back over which we have no control-death. The Wicca feel that on this night the separation between the physical and spiritual realities is thin. Wiccans remember their ancestors and all those who have gone before.

Herbs

Pumpkin, Apple, Nuts, Thistle, Chysanthemum, Broom, Oak Leaves, Sage

Incense

Apple, Nutmeg, Sage, Mint

Color

Black and Orange

Decorations

Jack-o-Lantern, Photos of Deceased Loved Ones, Apples, Fall Leaves, Autumn Flowers, Squashes

Foods

Apples, Corn, Nuts, Cider, Mulled Wine, Pumpkin Dishes, Cranberry Muffins, Herbal Teas



One of the simplest of magical arts which comes under the heading of natural magic is candle burning. It is simple because it employs little ritual and few ceremonial artifacts. The theatrical props of candle magic can be purchased at any department store and its rituals can be practiced in any sitting room or bedroom.

Most of us have performed our first act of candle magic by the time we are two years old. Blowing out the tiny candles on our first birthday cake and making a wish is pure magic. This childhood custom is based on the three magical principals of concentration, will power and visualization. In simple terms, the child who wants his wish to come true has to concentrate (blow out the candles), visualize the end result (make a wish) and hope that it will come true (will power).

The size and shape of the candles you use is unimportant, although highly decorative, extra large, or unusually shaped candles will not be suitable as these may create distractions when the magician wants to concentrate on the important work in hand. Most magicians prefer to use candles of standard or uniform size if possible. Those which are sold in different colors for domestic use are ideal.

The candles you use for any type of magical use should be virgin, that is unused. Under no

circumstances use a candle which has already adorned a dinner table or been used as a bedroom candle or night-light. There is a very good occult reason for not using anything but virgin materials in magic. Vibrations picked up by secondhand materials or equipment may disturb your workings and negate their effectiveness.

Some people prefer to make their own candles for ritual and magical use. This is a very practical exercise because not only does it impregnate the candle with your own personal vibrations, but the mere act of making your own candle is magically potent. Specialist shops (and some hobby shops) sell candle wax and molds together with wicks, perfumes, and other equipment.

The hot wax is heated until liquid and then poured into the mould through which a suitably sized wick has already been threaded. The wax is then left to cool and once this has occurred the mould is removed, leaving a perfectly formed candle. Special oil-soluble dyes and perfumes can be added to the wax before the cooling process is complete to provide suitable colors and scents for a particular magical ritual. Craft shops which sell candlemaking supplies can also provide do-it-yourself books explaining the technicalities of the art to the beginner.



Once you have purchased or made your ritual candle it has to be oiled or 'dressed' before burning. The purpose of dressing the candle is to establish a psychic link between it and the magician through a primal sensory experience. By physically touching the candle during the dressing procedure, you are charging it with our own personal vibrations and also concentrating the desire of your magical act into the wax. The candle is becoming an extension of the magicians mental power and life energy.

When you dress a candle for magical use, imagine that it is a psychic magnet with a North and a South pole. Rub the oil into the candle beginning at the top or North end and work downwards to the half-way point. Always brush in the same direction downwards. This process is then repeated by beginning at the bottom or south end and working up to the middle. The best type of oils to use for dressing candles are natural ones which can be obtained quite easily. Some occult suppliers will provide candle magic oils with exotic names. If the magician does not want to use these, he can select suitable oils or perfumes from his own sources. The oils soluble perfumes sold by craft shops for inclusion in candles

can be recommended.

Colors and Their Healing Properties

(Important Note: If the ailment that needs to be treated does not appear on this list, or for any reason you are unsure of the proper healing color to use, allow your intuition and the Goddess within you to be your guide)

White-symbolizes innocence, purity and peace. It is an excellent color to use for astral travel, crystal gazing, inner peace, meditation and summoning spirit guides. The color white helps to prevent stroke, increases breast milk in nursing women, and is good for treating broken bones, calcium deficiency and toothache pains.

Red-is the color of energy and life. It is a fiery, invigorating color which is excellent for treating anemia, cancer, exhaustion, frostbite, leukemia, liver infections, neuralgia and paralysis.

Pink, Rose-is a positive color symbolic of love and harmony. It protects, rejuvenates and bring hope, restful sleep ailments of the heart, anxiety, constipation, depression, hearing loss and kidney problems.

Yellow-intellectualism, imagination, memory and

creativity. Is stimulating and uplifting. It helps to dispel fears and is an excellent color to use for treating constipation, diabetes, heartburn, indigestion, menstrual cramps and most skin conditions.

Green-is the color of nature, fertility, abundance, good luck and harmony. It is a good color for treating boils, cancer, colds, headaches, high blood pressure, kidney ailments nervousness and ulcers.



Blue-inspiration, occult wisdom, protection and devotion. Is a cool color that soothes and relaxes. It is excellent for treating burns, diarrhea, fever, headaches, high blood pressure, insomnia, menstrual cramps, rheumatism, skin rashes, sore throat, sunburn, ulcer and minor wounds.

Purple-is a vibrating color that is highly spiritual and inspirational. It aids in meditation, psychic development and creativity, and it is a good color for treating allergies, asthma, baldness, blood clots, colds, gout, mental disorders, sinus problems, sleep

disorders, stress related diseases and tumors.

Silver-clairvoyance, inspiration, astral energy and intuition

Orange-ambition, career matters and the law. It is a stimulating and energizing color. It possesses many of the same properties as red and is very good for the treatment of arthritis, asthma, bronchitis, constipation, coughs, depression, epilepsy and exhaustion.

Aqua-is a soothing stress-reducing color that harmonizes and balances. It is good for treating burns, eye ailments, high blood pressure, hypersensitivity, infections, inflammations, nutritional disorders and skin problems.

Indigo-is a vitalizing color that cleanses the spirit, removes fear and counteracts all negative energy forces. it is good for treating asthma, deafness, dementia, depression, epilepsy, eye ailments, infections, mental and nerbous disorders, Parkinsons disease, pneumonia, tuberculosis and upset stomach.

The simples form of candle magic is to write the objective of your ritual on a virgin piece of paper. You can use color paper which matches the candle.

Write your petition on the paper using a magical alphabet, such as theban, enochian, malachain, etc. As you write down what you want to accomplish through candle magic--a new job, healing for a friend, a change of residence, a new love affair, etc.--visualize your dream coming true. Visualize the circumstances under which you might be offered a new job, imagine your employer telling you that your salary has been increased or conjure up a vision of your perfect love partner.

When you have completed writing down your petition, carefully fold up the paper in a deliberately slow fashion. Place the end of the folded paper in the candle flame and set light to it. As you do this concentrate once more on what you want from life.

When you have completed your ritual, allow the candle to have completely burned away. You do not need to stay with the candle after the ritual, but make sure that is safe and that red-hot wax will not cause damage or fire. Never re-use a candle which has been lit in any magical ritual. IT should only be used in that ritual and then allowed to burn away or be disposed of afterwards.

If you are conducting a magical ritual which involves two people (e.g. an absent healing for a person some distance away) then the second person can be

symbolically represented during the ritual by another candle. All you need to do is find out the subject's birth date and burn the appropriate candle for that zodiacal sign. These are as follows:

ARIES red
TAURUS green
GEMINI yellow
CANCER silver
LEO orange
VIRGO yellow
LIBRA pink
SCORPIO red
SAGITARIUS purple
CAPRICORN black
AQUARIUS all colors
PISCES mauve



The God

The God has been revered for eons. He is neither the stern, all powerful deity of Christianity and Judaism, nor is He simply the consort of the Goddess. God or Goddess, they are equal, one. We see the God in the Sun, brilliantly shining overhead during the day, rising and setting in the endless cycle which governs our lives. Without the Sun we could not exist; therefore it has been revered as the source of all life, the warmth that bursts the dormant seeds into life and hastens the greening of the Earth after the cold snows of winter.

The God is also tender of the wild animals. As the Horned God, He is sometimes seen wearing horns on His head, symbolizing His connection with these beasts. The Gods domain includes forests untouched by human hands, burning deserts and towering mountains. The stars, since they are but distant suns, are sometimes thought to be under His domain. Symbols often used to depict or to worship the God

include the sword, horns, spear, candle, gold, brass, diamond, the sickle, arrow, magical wand, trident, knife, and others. Creatures sacred to Him include the bull, dog, snake, fish, stag, dragon, wolf, boar, eagle, falcon, shark, lizard and many others.

Today the deities of Wicca are still firmly associated with fertility, but every aspect of human existence can be linked with the Goddess and god. They can be called upon to help us sort through the vicissitudes of our existences and bring joy into our often spiritually bereft lives.

This doesn't mean that when problems occur we should leave them in the hands of the Goddess. This is a stalling maneuver, an avoidance of dealing with the bumps on the road of life. However, as Wiccans we can call on the Goddess and God to clear our minds and to help us help ourselves. Magic is an excellent means of accomplishing this. After attuning with the Goddess and God, Wiccans ask Their assistance during the magical rite that usually follows.

Because the Deities are the creative forces of the universe we can call upon Them to empower our rites and to bless our magic. To develop a rapport with the Goddess and God, a necessity for those who desire to practice Wicca, you might wish to follow these simple rituals.

At night, stand or sit facing the Moon, if it is visible.

If not, imagine the fullest Moon you've ever seen glowing silver-white in the inky blackness, directly above and before you. Feel the soft lunar light streaming onto your skin. Sense it touching and mixing with your own energies, commingling and forming new patterns. See The Goddess in any form that you will. Call to her, chanting old names if you wish: Diana, Lucina, Selena (pronouncing them as: Dee-AH-nah, Loo-CHEE-nah, Say-LEE-nah). Open your heart and mind to the aspect of Goddess-energy manifested in the Moons light.

Repeat this daily for one week, preferably at the same time each night. Concurrently with this exercise, attune with the God. Upon rising in the morning, no matter how late it is, stand before the Sun (through a window if necessary; outside if possible) and soak in its energies. Think about the God. Visualize Him as you wish. It might be as a mighty warrior rippling with muscles, a spear upraised in one hand, the other cradling a child or a bunch of dew-dripping grapes.

You may want to chant God names, such as Kernunnos, Osiris, Apollo (Care-NOON-nos, Oh-SIGH-rus, Ah-PALL-low) as with the Goddess. Let no thoughts but those of the God disturb your reverie. Reach out with your feelings; open your awareness of higher things. Call upon the God in any words.

Express your desire to attune with Him. Practice these exercises daily for one week. If after seven days

you feel the need (or desire), continue these exercises until you feel comfortable with the Goddess and God.

In your quest to know the Gods, take long walks beneath tress. Study flowers and plants. Visit wild, natural places and feel the energies of the Goddess and God directly-through the rush of a stream, the pulse of energy from an old oak's trunk, the heat of a Sun-warmed rock.

Next, when you have achieved this state, you may wish to set up a temporary or permanent shrine or altar to the Goddess and God. This neednt be more than a small table, two candles, an incense burner and a plate or bowl to hold offerings of flowers, fruit, grain, seed, wine or milk.



Place the two candles in their holders to the rear of the shrine. The candle on the left represents the

Goddess; that on the right the God. Colors are often used to distinguish between the two; a red candle for the God and a green one to honor the Goddess. This ties in with the nature-associations of Wicca, for green and red are ancient magical colors linked with life and death. Other colors can be used-yellow or gold to honor the God, and white or silver for the Goddess. Before and between these candles place the incense burner, and in front of this the plate or offering bowl. A vase of seasonal flowers can also be added, as can any personal power objects such as crystals, fossils and dried herbs.

To begin a simple ritual to the Gods at your shrine, stand before it with an offering of some kind in your hand. Light the candles and incense, place the offering in the bowl or plate, and say such words as these:

*Lady of the Moon, of the restless sea and verdant
Earth,
Lord of the Sun and of the wild creatures,
Accept this offering I place here in your honor.
Grant me the wisdom to see Your presence in all
nature,
O Great Ones!*

Afterward, sit or stand for a few minutes in contemplation of the deities and of your growing relationship with them. Feel them inside and around you. Then quench the flames (use your fingers, a candle snuffer, or a knife blade. Blowing them out is an affront to the element of Fire). Allow the incense to burn itself out, and continue on with your day or night.

If you wish, go before the shrine once a day at a prescribed time. This may be upon rising, just before sleep, or after lunch. Light the candles, attune and commune with the Goddess and God. This isn't necessary, but the steadily rhythm set up by this cycle is beneficial and will improve your relationship with the deities. Return the offerings left on the shrine to the Earth at the end of each day, or when you bring more to leave.



Witchcraft Gardening Basics
Or, "A Crash Course in a Witch's Garden"



A Witch knows that when considering our health, we cannot separate it from our environment. The Earth's health influences and reflects our own. As Pagans, we

are particularly responsible for caring for our environment because we understand this interconnectedness.

The garden is an excellent place to begin a ripple effect of healing by tending it in a sustainable manner. Responsible gardening will help lead to healing of the environment, and of ourselves. This healing can be seen by the increase of vitamins in the foods we've grown organically. Subtle healing effects will gradually become evident as gaps in life cycles are filled. All forms of wildlife and insects will return to the garden and renew the essential balance, eliminating the need for pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilizers.

The garden will also renew your balance and life force. Tending the garden will tone your body, clarify your mind, and energize your Spirit. Other side effects of your healthy garden will become apparent in all aspects of your life. Healing formulas, spell components, and any other creations that incorporate plants grown in this magical manner will all have enormously magnified energy.

To understand this method, go to an undisturbed area like a woodland plot, secluded area of a park, or under a large, healthy shrub. Notice that when you're under a canopy of foliage the atmosphere is different. It smells fresh, moist, and soothing. Touch the soil. Generally, it will be soft and spongy, with layers of

newly accumulated debris, and below that, humus rich soil in many stages of decomposition. The soil here contains microorganisms whose sacred names include fungi, protozoa, yeast, worms, and insects. These life forms are known collectively as edaphon. Life flows through everything here and you may begin to feel more balanced. This feeling is the essence of a Witch's method of gardening. (there's more to this than the standard gardening techniques, read on)

Good soil ('scientifically') consists of 93% mineral and 7% bio-organic substances. The bio-organic parts include: 85% humus, 10% roots, and 5%edaphon. The edaphon consists of: 40% fungi/algae, 40% bacteria/actinomycete, 12% earthworms, 5% macro fauna, and 3% micro/mesofauna. (1)

After a year of organic treatment, earthworms, or "tiny tillers", should flourish.

Chemical fertilizers kill earthworms and other soil life that release carbonic acid (plant roots do too). This acid converts minerals in the soil to a form that plants can assimilate.

Soil nutrients are to plants what proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals are to people.

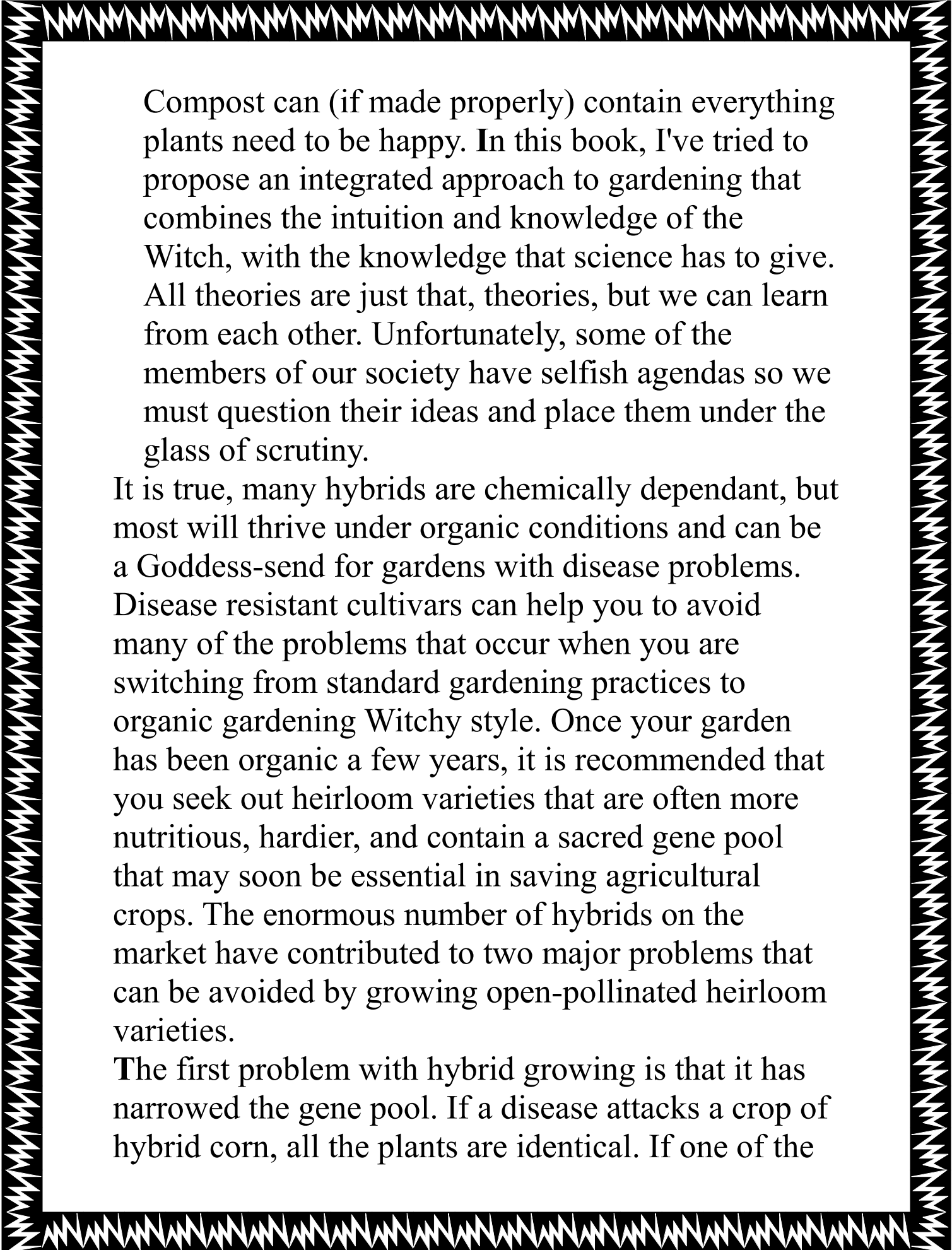
Air, (all gasses, including carbon dioxide or CO₂)

Water, Earth and Fire (sun) are essential to the plant world. Synthetic forms of nitrogen, phosphorus and

potassium (N, P, and K respectively) in chemical fertilizers are stated on packages like 15-30-15 or 10-5-5. These salt based fertilizers will readily wash out of the soil and into our water systems. Undines look out!

We must regularly replace non-organic forms of these nutrients because of this constant leeching. Salts accumulate in the upper soil surfaces and "burn" tender roots and soil life. Potted plants will show evidence of this build up with powdery white deposits on the soil surface or a ring on the pot. Most plants cannot tolerate this much salt in any form. This is a good reason to try not to use salt in outdoor rituals for circle casting or purification. Instead, use a truly sacred replacement such as compost or soil for the Earth element. (I've used soil from my birthplace, as well as soil from fellow Witch's gardens to help link with them when being together in person isn't possible)

Synthetic fertilizers cause plant cells to grow too quickly, developing thin cell walls. The spaces between each cell are larger too, causing the entire plant to be more susceptible to insects and disease. These plant predators hunt for the easiest path to lunch, and the thin cell walls and gaps between them are an open invitation. By invading your crops, these pesky predators are fulfilling an essential duty, that of restoring balance and eliminating problems.



Compost can (if made properly) contain everything plants need to be happy. In this book, I've tried to propose an integrated approach to gardening that combines the intuition and knowledge of the Witch, with the knowledge that science has to give. All theories are just that, theories, but we can learn from each other. Unfortunately, some of the members of our society have selfish agendas so we must question their ideas and place them under the glass of scrutiny.

It is true, many hybrids are chemically dependant, but most will thrive under organic conditions and can be a Goddess-send for gardens with disease problems. Disease resistant cultivars can help you to avoid many of the problems that occur when you are switching from standard gardening practices to organic gardening Witchy style. Once your garden has been organic a few years, it is recommended that you seek out heirloom varieties that are often more nutritious, hardier, and contain a sacred gene pool that may soon be essential in saving agricultural crops. The enormous number of hybrids on the market have contributed to two major problems that can be avoided by growing open-pollinated heirloom varieties.

The first problem with hybrid growing is that it has narrowed the gene pool. If a disease attacks a crop of hybrid corn, all the plants are identical. If one of the

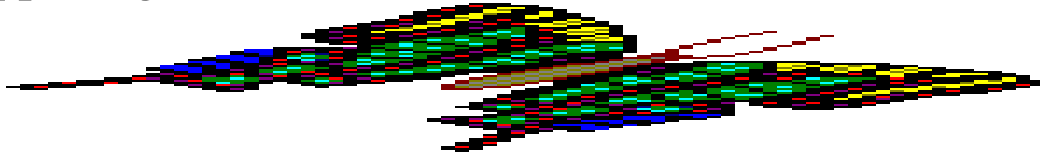
plants has no resistance, none of them do. Essentially, these clones present a serious famine danger and force farmers (and gardeners) to resort to chemical 'antidotes' that only accelerate our environmental problems. With open pollinated varieties, each plant is just a little different. Much of a diseased crop may die, but the ones that survive are naturally resistant (and are often used to create resistant hybrids) This brings us to the second problem with hybrids.

The second problem with hybrid growing is that it takes power away from farmers and gardeners. Most hybrids you see (they might say F1 or F2 etc. on the label) are sterile mutants. This means that you as a home gardener cannot save seeds from your favorite plants, from the ones that survive diseases, or drought, or insect attacks, or the ones that are the biggest, the juiciest, the sweetest, the most magickally potent or whatever, and expect to have a similar crop from your saved seeds. The seeds you save from a hybrid will be mutants when they 'revert'.

You can clearly see from this, a kind of paranoid conspiracy theory happening. You cannot develop hardy strains in your back yard if they are hybrids, and you cannot develop hybrids without funding from major industries. The primary industries interested in funding this type of work, are the ones that create garden chemicals. Ok, so it is paranoid, but by seeking out the old varieties, you help yourself

and the planet, and may some day prevent a major catastrophe by donating YOUR seeds to a weakened gene pool. What if you select the best of your corn over decades, then one year, 90% of the world's corn harvest is destroyed by a disease. Now, what if your corn survived?! You would be the super-corn-hero of the world by allowing your corn to be studied, and integrated into other corn varieties.

Sound far fetched? It has happened before, and may happen again!



So, you ask, how can I nourish my garden, self and planet? The following represents a basic outline of techniques to get you started:

Compost: Composting will unlock the nutrients from the components you put in the compost pile. Begin by making a four foot diameter place in your garden in part sun. Next, layer 4-6 inches of carbon materials, "browns," with 1-2 inches of nitrogen material, "greens." Mystical formulas of carbon to nitrogen ratios can be found in many superb garden grimoires. Like all of Nature's magic, however, you will find that intuition, observation, and experimentation provide the best results. The following describes the basic compost cauldron

components and guidelines for their use:

DO USE: "Greens" are sources of nitrogen, a plant nutrient that helps heat up a compost pile by activating the micro life in it. Sources include: fresh green weeds, kitchen scraps, manures, cottonseed meal, and blood meal. "Browns" are carbon materials like straw, hay, last year's garden debris, crop residue, chopped leaves, and sticks under a half inch in diameter.

DON'T USE: Oil, wax, meat (small, clean bones are OK), colored newspaper, weeds that have set seed, diseased or pest infested plants, and pet wastes or litters. (which can carry diseases, among other problems)

Invoke the powers of the microbial soil life with a half inch layer of garden soil sprinkled over each "green" layer. When the pile reaches about four feet high, water it well to the consistency of a wrung out sponge, and let it rot! It will slowly turn into fertilizer that feeds your plants and your soil without interrupting the symbiotic relationship between the two. When it is done, it will be brown and crumbly. This process can take from two weeks to six months. If you're in a hurry, you can speed things up by turning it every week. To turn a pile, remove the top and outside layers and put them on the ground beside the pile. Then continue with the next layers until you've turned it upside down while fluffing it to let it

breathe. If the pile smells bad, or if flies are taking an interest in it, then turn the pile, incorporate more "browns," make sure it's not soggy (cover it in the rain), and cover the top of the heap with an inch of soil or hay to eliminate the problem and disapproving looks from neighbors. Finished compost is used as a fertilizer and mulch around and under plants.

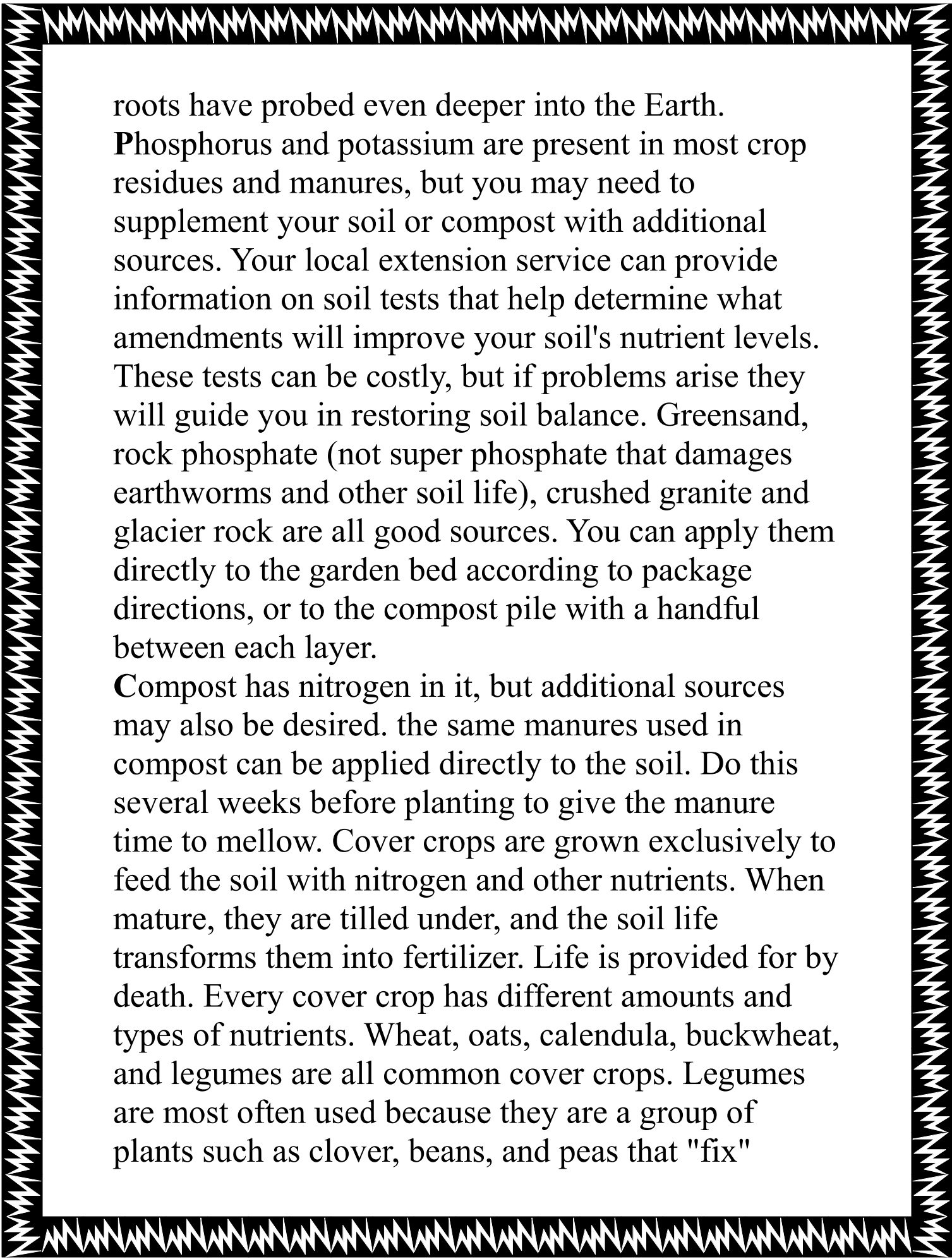
Diseased plants and weeds with seeds require hot compost, one that reaches 140-165 degrees. This technique is best left for more experienced practitioners who are more adept at its mysteries. Use these plant materials as erosion control far from the garden, burn them, or if necessary, dispose of them in the regular garbage. Meanwhile, train yourself in hot compost magic through the recommended reading (2), intuition, and experience.

Nearly all organic forms of nitrogen, like those used in making compost, contain varying amounts of phosphorus, potassium, and trace minerals.

Composting ingredients that contain high percentages of these nutrients will improve your end fertilizer.

Trace minerals can be derived from plants with literally rock breaking, carrot-like tap roots that explore 25 feet or more down into the Earth. These plants include dandelions, alfalfa, comfrey, and plantain. Harvest their leaves as a "green" and let the roots put forth new leaves for the next compost pile.

The older the plant, the better the fertilizer, as the



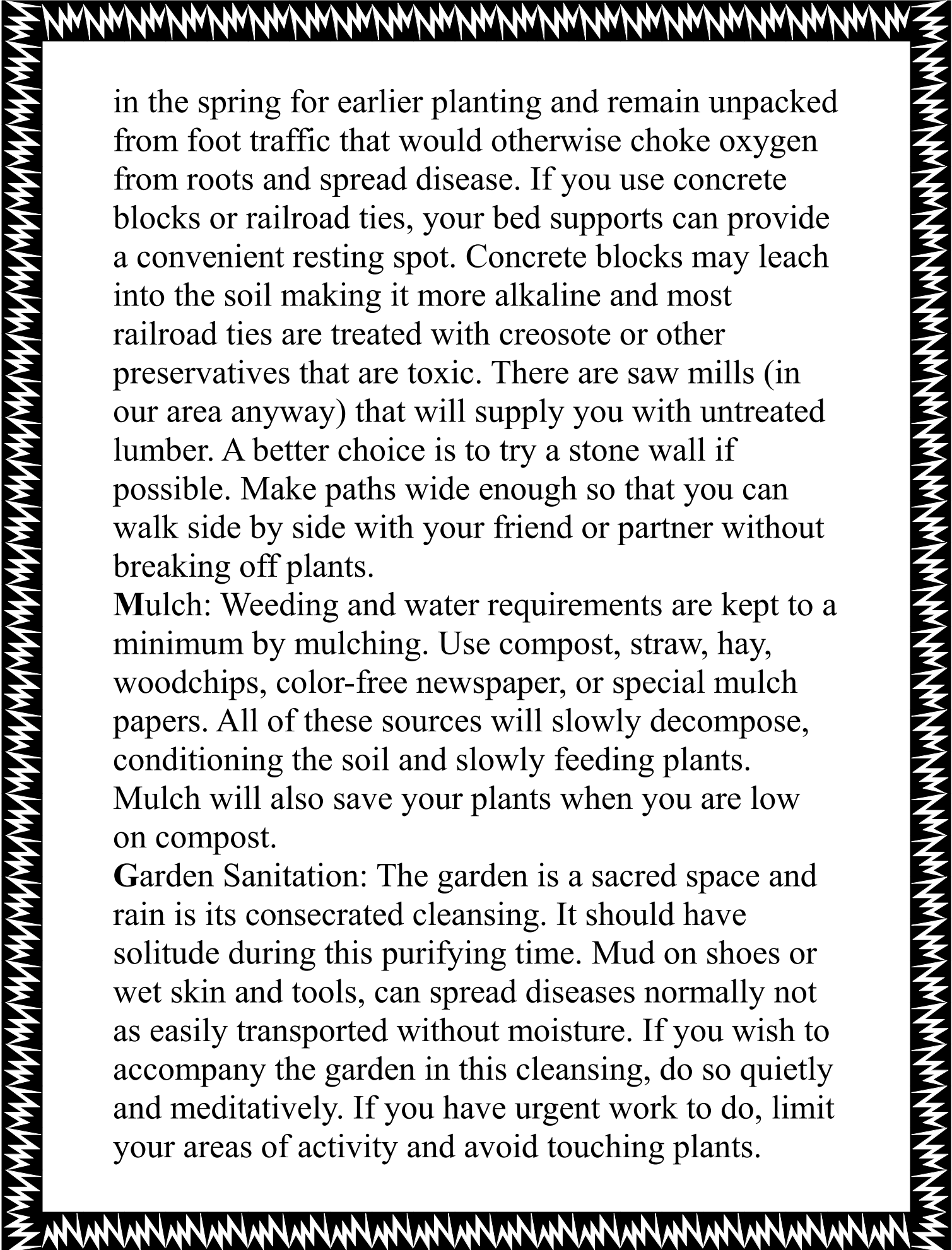
roots have probed even deeper into the Earth. Phosphorus and potassium are present in most crop residues and manures, but you may need to supplement your soil or compost with additional sources. Your local extension service can provide information on soil tests that help determine what amendments will improve your soil's nutrient levels. These tests can be costly, but if problems arise they will guide you in restoring soil balance. Greensand, rock phosphate (not super phosphate that damages earthworms and other soil life), crushed granite and glacier rock are all good sources. You can apply them directly to the garden bed according to package directions, or to the compost pile with a handful between each layer.

Compost has nitrogen in it, but additional sources may also be desired. the same manures used in compost can be applied directly to the soil. Do this several weeks before planting to give the manure time to mellow. Cover crops are grown exclusively to feed the soil with nitrogen and other nutrients. When mature, they are tilled under, and the soil life transforms them into fertilizer. Life is provided for by death. Every cover crop has different amounts and types of nutrients. Wheat, oats, calendula, buckwheat, and legumes are all common cover crops. Legumes are most often used because they are a group of plants such as clover, beans, and peas that "fix"

nitrogen. They have a symbiotic relationship with a type of soil life known as nematodes. These beneficial nematodes take nitrogen from the air and "fix" it to the legume's roots. They look like tiny white potatoes clinging to the root system. They release nitrogen to the plant, helping it thrive. When the crop of legumes is tilled into the soil, it becomes a time release fertilizer as plants and nematodes break down again.

The following tips will also help to create your bewitching garden. These methods can be used in any garden, in sun or shade, and can be started any time of the year with Spring and Summer being ideal.

Raised beds: Raised beds save water, compost and amendments that are only used where the plants grow and not in paths. Crops can be grown closer together which saves space. You do not need to use the "space between rows" recommendation from seed packets, since rows are not used. Only the "space between plants" recommendation is needed. (4) This provides a canopy of foliage that traps CO₂ and soil moisture like a suspended mulch. The leaves shade the soil to further reduce weeding and watering chores. Make beds wide enough to reach across comfortably (4 ft. is standard) in order to save work from bending and straining. Raised beds drain well to allow plants to develop healthy root systems, and they solve rot problems in packed clay soil. They also warm faster

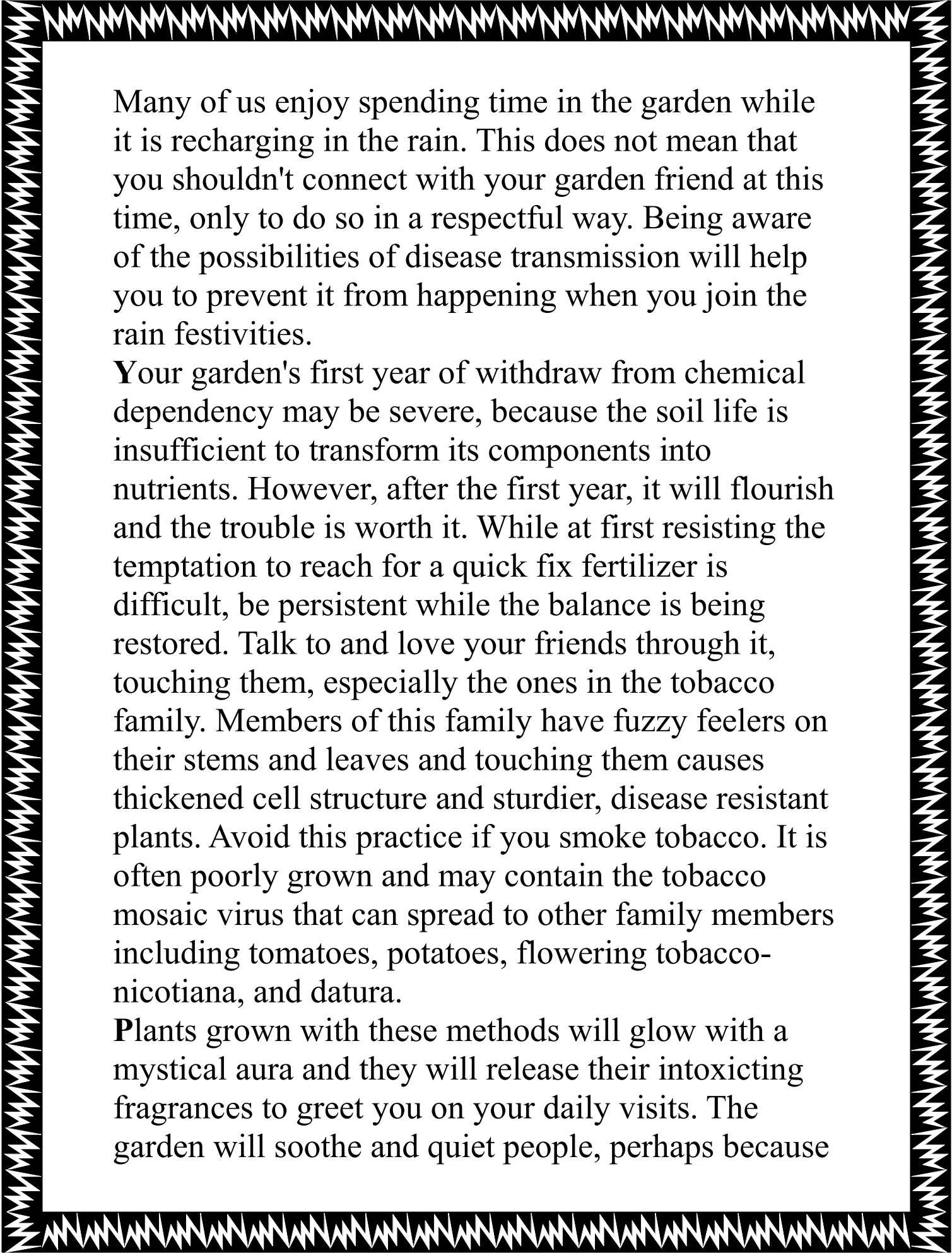


in the spring for earlier planting and remain unpacked from foot traffic that would otherwise choke oxygen from roots and spread disease. If you use concrete blocks or railroad ties, your bed supports can provide a convenient resting spot. Concrete blocks may leach into the soil making it more alkaline and most railroad ties are treated with creosote or other preservatives that are toxic. There are saw mills (in our area anyway) that will supply you with untreated lumber. A better choice is to try a stone wall if possible. Make paths wide enough so that you can walk side by side with your friend or partner without breaking off plants.

Mulch: Weeding and water requirements are kept to a minimum by mulching. Use compost, straw, hay, woodchips, color-free newspaper, or special mulch papers. All of these sources will slowly decompose, conditioning the soil and slowly feeding plants.

Mulch will also save your plants when you are low on compost.

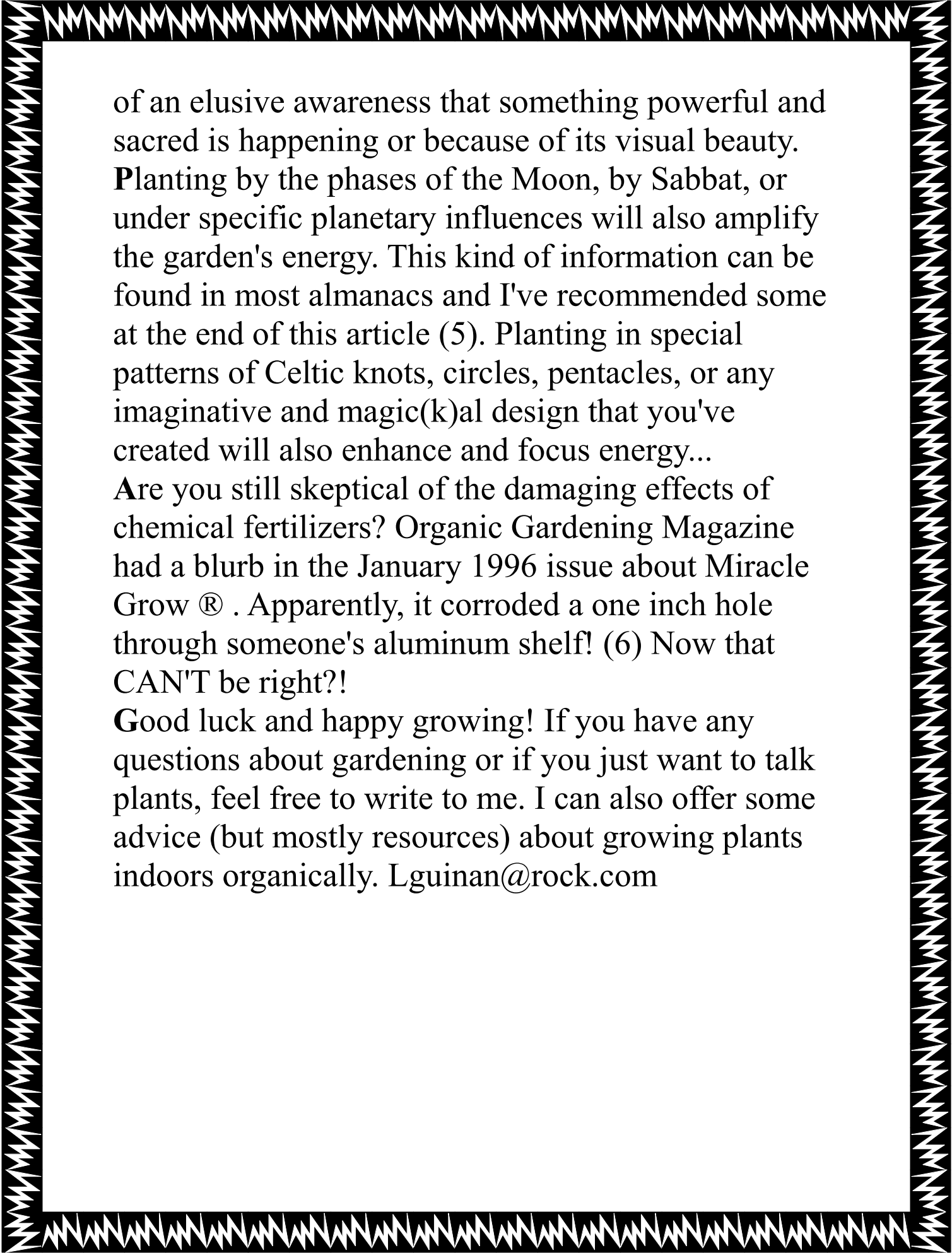
Garden Sanitation: The garden is a sacred space and rain is its consecrated cleansing. It should have solitude during this purifying time. Mud on shoes or wet skin and tools, can spread diseases normally not as easily transported without moisture. If you wish to accompany the garden in this cleansing, do so quietly and meditatively. If you have urgent work to do, limit your areas of activity and avoid touching plants.



Many of us enjoy spending time in the garden while it is recharging in the rain. This does not mean that you shouldn't connect with your garden friend at this time, only to do so in a respectful way. Being aware of the possibilities of disease transmission will help you to prevent it from happening when you join the rain festivities.

Your garden's first year of withdraw from chemical dependency may be severe, because the soil life is insufficient to transform its components into nutrients. However, after the first year, it will flourish and the trouble is worth it. While at first resisting the temptation to reach for a quick fix fertilizer is difficult, be persistent while the balance is being restored. Talk to and love your friends through it, touching them, especially the ones in the tobacco family. Members of this family have fuzzy feelers on their stems and leaves and touching them causes thickened cell structure and sturdier, disease resistant plants. Avoid this practice if you smoke tobacco. It is often poorly grown and may contain the tobacco mosaic virus that can spread to other family members including tomatoes, potatoes, flowering tobacco-nicotiana, and datura.

Plants grown with these methods will glow with a mystical aura and they will release their intoxicating fragrances to greet you on your daily visits. The garden will soothe and quiet people, perhaps because



of an elusive awareness that something powerful and sacred is happening or because of its visual beauty. Planting by the phases of the Moon, by Sabbat, or under specific planetary influences will also amplify the garden's energy. This kind of information can be found in most almanacs and I've recommended some at the end of this article (5). Planting in special patterns of Celtic knots, circles, pentacles, or any imaginative and magic(k)al design that you've created will also enhance and focus energy...

Are you still skeptical of the damaging effects of chemical fertilizers? Organic Gardening Magazine had a blurb in the January 1996 issue about Miracle Grow ® . Apparently, it corroded a one inch hole through someone's aluminum shelf! (6) Now that CAN'T be right?!

Good luck and happy growing! If you have any questions about gardening or if you just want to talk plants, feel free to write to me. I can also offer some advice (but mostly resources) about growing plants indoors organically. Lguinan@rock.com